





# THE MODERN EGYPTIANS.

## INTRODUCTION.

THE COUNTRY AND CLIMATE—METROPOLIS—HOUSES—  
POPULATION.

It is generally observed, that many of the most remarkable peculiarities in the manners, customs, and character of a nation, are attributable to the physical peculiarities of the country. Such causes, in an especial manner, affect the moral and social state of the modern Egyptians, and therefore here require some preliminary notice : but it will not as yet be necessary to explain their particular influences : these will be evinced in many subsequent parts of the present work.

The Nile, in its course through the narrow and winding valley of Upper Egypt, which is confined on each side by mountainous and sandy deserts, as well as through the plain of Lower Egypt, is everywhere bordered, excepting in a very few places, by cultivated fields of its own formation. These cultivated tracts are not perfectly level, being somewhat lower towards the deserts than in the neighbourhood of the river. They are interspersed with palm-groves and villages, and intersected by numerous canals. The copious summer rains which prevail in Abyssinia and the neighbouring countries



begin to show their effects in Egypt, by the rising of the Nile, about the period of the summer solstice. By the autumnal equinox, the river attains its greatest height, which is always sufficient to fill the canals by which the fields are irrigated, and, generally, to inundate large portions of the cultivable land: it then gradually falls until the period when it again begins to rise. Being impregnated, particularly during its rise, with rich soil washed down from the mountainous countries whence it flows, a copious deposit is annually spread, either by the natural inundation or by artificial irrigation, over the fields which border it; while its bed, from the same cause, rises in an equal degree. The Egyptians depend entirely upon their river for the fertilization of the soil; rain being a very rare phenomenon in their country, excepting in the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean; and as the seasons are perfectly regular, the peasant may make his arrangements with the utmost precision respecting the labour he will have to perform. Sometimes his labour is light; but when it consists in raising water for irrigation, it is excessively severe.

The climate of Egypt, during the greater part of the year, is remarkably salubrious. The exhalations from the soil after the period of the inundation render the latter part of the autumn less healthy than the summer and winter; and cause ophthalmia and dysentery, and some other diseases, to be more prevalent than at other seasons; and during a period of somewhat more or less than fifty days (called *el-khum'a'sce'n*), commencing in April, and lasting throughout May, hot southerly winds occasionally prevail for about three days together. These winds, though they seldom cause the thermometer of Fahrenheit to rise above 95° in Lower



Egypt, or, in Upper Egypt,  $105^{\circ}$ \*, are dreadfully oppressive, even to the natives. When the plague visits Egypt, it is generally in the spring; and this disease is most severe in the period of the khum'a'see'n. Egypt is also subject, particularly during the spring and summer, to the hot wind called the *semoo'm*, which is still more oppressive than the khum'a'see'n winds, but of much shorter duration; seldom lasting longer than a quarter of an hour, or twenty minutes. It generally proceeds from the south-east, or south-south-east, and carries with it clouds of dust and sand. The general height of the thermometer in the depth of winter in Lower Egypt, in the afternoon and in the shade, is from  $50^{\circ}$  to  $60^{\circ}$ : in the hottest season it is from  $90^{\circ}$  to  $100^{\circ}$ ; and about ten degrees higher in the southern parts of Upper Egypt. But though the summer heat is so great, it is seldom very oppressive; being generally accompanied by a refreshing northerly breeze, and the air being extremely dry. There is, however, one great source of discomfort arising from this dryness, namely, an excessive quantity of dust; and there are other plagues which very much detract from the comfort which the natives of Egypt, and visitors to their country, otherwise derive from its genial climate. In spring, summer, and autumn, flies are so abundant as to be extremely annoying during the day-time, and mosquitoes are troublesome at night (unless a curtain be made use of to keep them away), and sometimes even in the day; and every house that contains much wood-work (as most of the better houses do) swarms with bugs during the warm weather. Lice are

\* This is the temperature in the shade. At Thebes, I have observed the thermometer to rise above  $110^{\circ}$  during a khum'a'see'n wind, in the shade.



not always to be avoided in any season, but they are easily got rid of; and in the cooler weather, fleas are excessively numerous.

The climate of Upper Egypt is more healthy, though hotter, than that of Lower Egypt. The plague seldom ascends far above Cairo, the metropolis. It is most common in the marshy parts of the country, near the Mediterranean. During the last ten years, the country having been better drained, and quarantine regulations adopted to prevent or guard against the introduction of this disease from other countries, very few plague-cases have occurred, excepting in the parts above-mentioned, and in those parts the pestilence has not been severe\*. Ophthalmia is also more common in Lower Egypt than in the southern parts. It generally arises from checked perspiration; but is aggravated by the dust and many other causes. When remedies are promptly employed, this disease is seldom alarming in its progress; but vast numbers of the natives of Egypt, not knowing how to treat it, or obstinately resigning themselves to fate, are deprived of the sight of one or both of their eyes.

When questioned respecting the salubrity of Egypt, I have often been asked whether many aged persons are seen among the inhabitants: few, certainly, attain a great age in this country; but how few do, in our own land, without more than once suffering from an illness

\* This remark was written before the terrible plague of the present year (1835), which was certainly introduced from Turkey, and extended throughout the whole of Egypt, though its ravages were not great in the southern parts. It has destroyed not less than eighty thousand persons in Cairo: that is, one-third of the population; and far more, I believe, than two hundred thousand in all Egypt.



that would prove fatal without medical aid, which is obtained by a very small number in Egypt! The heat of the summer months is sufficiently oppressive to occasion considerable lassitude, while, at the same time, it excites the Egyptian to intemperance in sensual enjoyments; and the exuberant fertility of the soil engenders indolence; little nourishment sufficing for the natives, and the sufficiency being procurable without much exertion.

The modern Egyptian metropolis, to the inhabitants of which most of the contents of the following pages relate, is now called *Musr*; but was formerly named *El-Cka'hireh*; whence Europeans have formed the name of *Cairo*. It is situated at the entrance of the valley of Upper Egypt, midway between the Nile and the eastern mountain range of Moockut'tum. Between it and the river there intervenes a tract of land, for the most part cultivated, which, in the northern parts (where the port of Boo'la'ck is situated), is more than a mile in width, and, at the southern part, less than half a mile wide. The metropolis occupies a space equal to about three square miles; and its population is about two hundred and forty thousand. It is surrounded by a wall, the gates of which are shut at night, and is commanded by a large citadel, situated at an angle of the town, near a point of the mountain. The streets are unpaved; and most of them are narrow and irregular: they might more properly be called lanes.

By a stranger who merely passed through the streets, Cairo would be regarded as a very close and crowded city; but that this is not the case, is evident to a person who overlooks the town from the top of a lofty house, or from the minaret of a mosque. The great thorough-



fare-streets have generally a row of shops along each side\*. Above the shops are apartments which do not communicate with them, and which are seldom occupied by the persons who rent the shops. To the right and left of the great thoroughfares are by-streets and quarters. Most of the by-streets are thoroughfares, and have a large wooden gate at each end, closed at night, and kept by a porter within, who opens to any persons requiring to be admitted. The quarters mostly consist of several narrow lanes, having but one general entrance, with a gate, which is also closed at night; but several have a by-street passing through them.

Of the private houses of the metropolis, it is particularly necessary that I should give a description. The accompanying engraving will serve to give a general notion of their exterior. The foundation-walls, to the height of the first floor, are cased, externally and often internally, with the soft calcareous stone of the neighbouring mountain. The surface of the stone, when newly cut, is of a light yellowish hue; but its colour soon darkens. The alternate courses of the front are sometimes coloured red and white, particularly in large houses; as is the case with most mosques†. The superstructure, the front of which generally projects about two feet, and is supported by corbels or piers, is of brick; and often plastered. The bricks are burnt, and of a dull red colour. The mortar is generally composed of

\* A view of shops in a street of Cairo will be found in this work.

† This mode of decorating the houses has lately become more general, in consequence of an order of the government, whereby the inhabitants were required thus to honour the arrival of Ibraheem Ba'sha from Syria.





**Private Houses in Cairo.**—The street in this view is wider than usual. The projecting windows on opposite sides of a street often nearly meet each other; almost entirely excluding the sun, and thus producing an agreeable coolness in the summer months





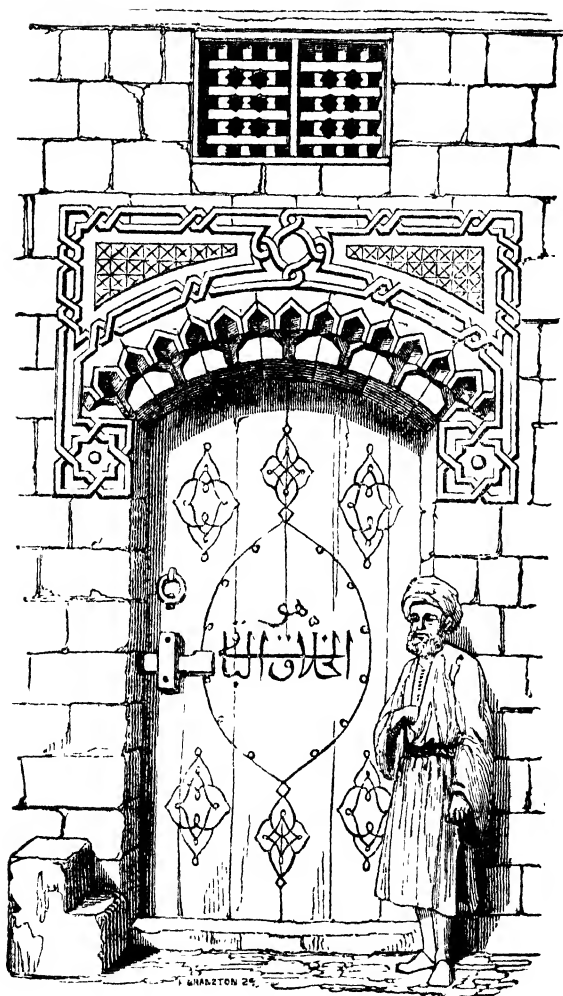


mud, in the proportion of one-half, with a fourth part of lime, and the remaining part of the ashes of straw and rubbish. Hence the unplastered walls of brick are of a dirty colour; as if the bricks were unburnt. The roof is flat, and covered with a coat of plaster.

The most usual architectural style of the entrance of a private house in Cairo, is shown by the sketch here inserted. The door is often ornamented in the manner here represented: the compartment in which is the inscription, and the other similarly-shaped compartments, are painted red, bordered with white; the rest of the surface of the door is painted green. The inscription, "He (*i. e.* God) is the Creator, the Everlasting" (the object of which will be explained when I treat of the superstitions of the Egyptians), is seen on many doors; but is far from being general; it is usually painted in black or white characters. Few doors but those of large houses are painted. They generally have an iron knocker, and a wooden lock; and there is usually a mounting-stone by the side.

The ground-floor apartments next the street have small wooden grated windows, placed sufficiently high to render it impossible for a person passing by in the street, even on horseback, to see through them. The windows of the upper apartments generally project a foot and a half, or more, and are mostly formed of turned wooden lattice-work, which is so close that it shuts out much of the light and sun, and screens the inmates of the house from the view of persons without, while at the same time it admits the air. They are generally of unpainted wood; but some few are partially painted red and green, and some are entirely painted. A window of this kind is called a *ro'shan*, or, more commonly, a





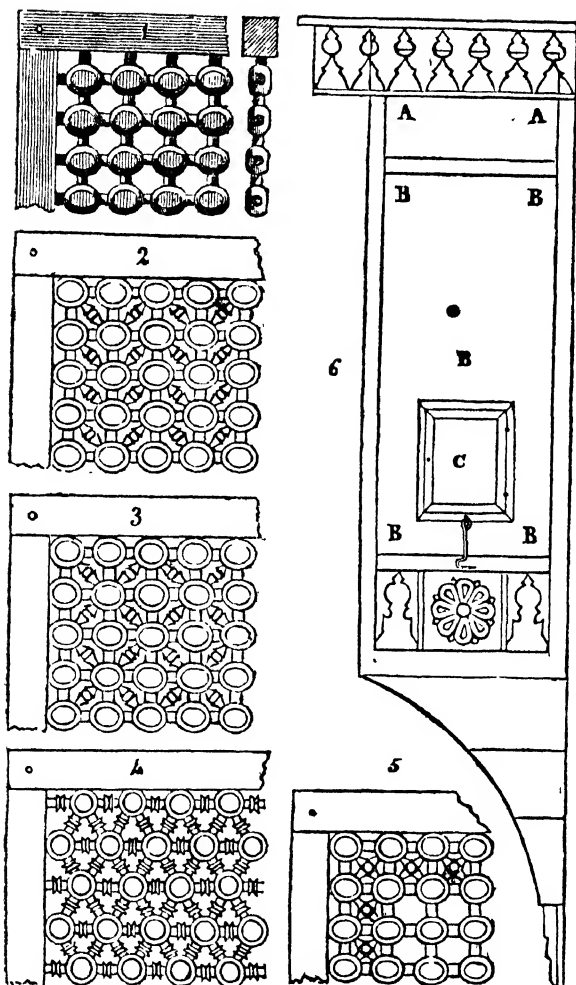
Door of a Private House.



*meshreeb'e'yeh*, which latter word has another application that will be mentioned below. Several windows of different descriptions are represented in some of the illustrations of this work; and sketches of the most common patterns of the lattice-work, on a larger scale, are here inserted\*. Sometimes a window of the kind above described has a little *meshreeb'e'yeh*, which somewhat resembles a *ro'shan* in miniature, projecting from the front, or from each side. In this, in order to be exposed to a current of air, are placed porous earthen bottles, which are used for cooling water by evaporation. Hence the name of "*meshreeb'e'yeh*," which signifies "a place for drink," or "—for drinking." The projecting window has a flat one of lattice-work, or of grating of wood, or of coloured glass, immediately above it. Some projecting windows are wholly constructed of boards; and a few have frames of glass in the sides. In the better houses, also, the windows of lattice-work are now generally furnished with frames of glass in the inside, which in the winter are wholly closed; for a penetrating cold is felt in Egypt when the thermometer of Fahrenheit is below 60°. The windows of inferior houses are mostly of a different kind; being even with the exterior surface of the wall: the upper part is of wooden lattice-

\* No. 1 is a view and section of a portion of the most simple kind. This and the other four kinds are here represented on a scale of about one-seventh of the real size. No. 6 shows the general proportions of the side of a projecting window. The portion A is, in most instances, of lattice-work similar to No. 1, and comprises about twelve rows of beads in the width: the portion B is commonly either of the same kind, or like No. 2 or No. 3; and the small lattice C, which is attached by hinges, is generally similar to No. 4.



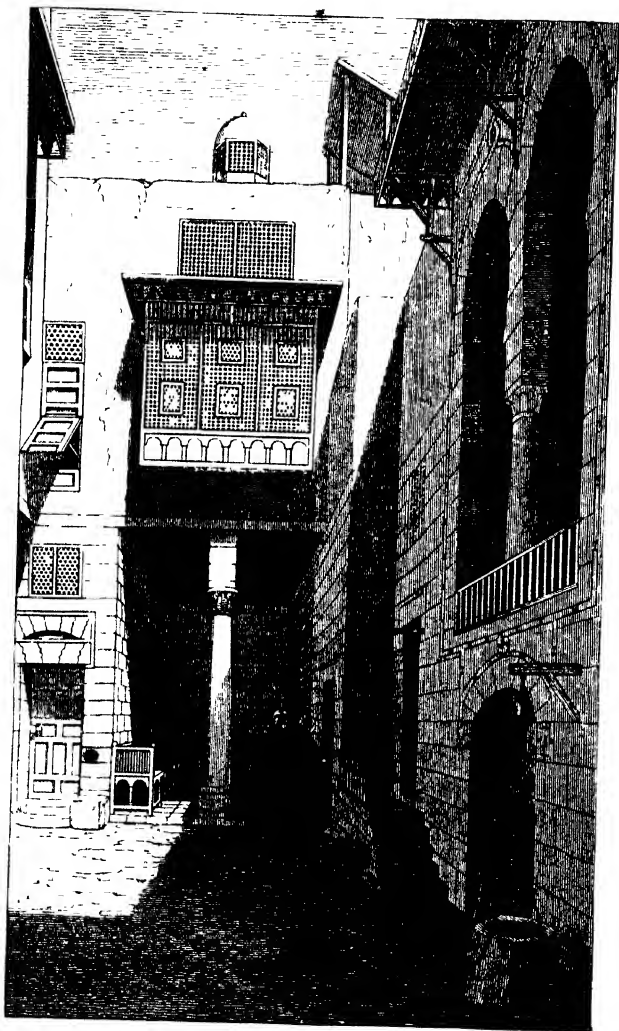


Specimens of Lattice-work.—From the centre of one row of beads to that of the next (in these specimens) is between an inch and a quarter and an inch and three quarters.









Court of a Private House in Cairo.



work -, or grating; and the lower, closed by hanging shutters; but many of these have a little meshreeb'e'yeh for the water-bottles projecting from the lower part.

The houses in general are two or three stories high; and almost every house that is sufficiently large encloses an open, unpaved court, called a *hho'sh*, which is entered by a passage that is constructed with one or two turnings, for the purpose of preventing passengers in the street from seeing into it. In this passage, just within the door, there is a long stone seat, called *mus'tub'ah*, built against the back or side wall, for the porter and other servants. In the court is a well of slightly brackish water, which filters through the soil from the Nile; and on its most shaded side are, commonly, two water-jars, which are daily replenished with water of the Nile, brought from the river in skins †. The principal apartments look into the court; and their exterior walls (those which are of brick) are plastered and white-washed. There are several doors which are entered from the court. One of these is called *ba'b el-hharee'm* (the door of the *hharee'm*): it is the entrance of the stairs which lead to the apartments appropriated exclusively to the women and their master and his children ‡.

In general, there is, on the ground-floor, an apartment called a *mun'dar'ah*, in which male visitors are received. This has a wide, wooden, grated window, or two windows of this kind, next the court. A small part

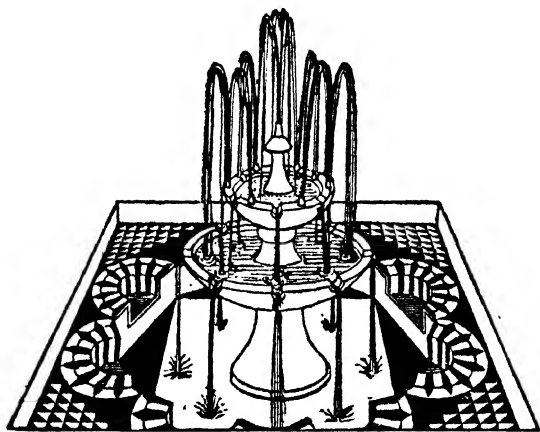
\* Commonly similar to No. 1, or No. 5.

† Some large houses have two courts; the inner for the *hharee'm*; and in the latter, or both of these, there is usually a little enclosure of arched wood-work, in which trees and flowers are raised.

‡ In the accompanying view of the court of a house, the door of the *hharee'm* is that which faces the spectator.



of the floor, extending from the door to the opposite side of the room, is six or seven inches lower than the rest: this part is called the *doorcka'ah*\*. In a handsome house, the *doorcka'ah* of the *mun'dar'ah* is paved with white and black marble, and little pieces of red tile, inlaid in complicated and tasteful patterns, and has in the centre a fountain (called *fiskee'yeh*), which

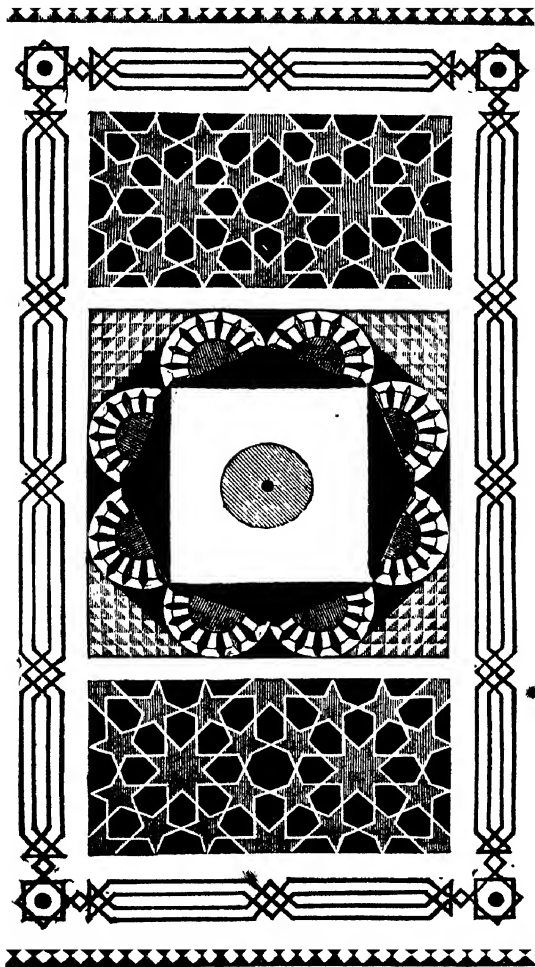


Fountain.

plays into a small, shallow pool, lined with coloured marbles, &c., like the surrounding pavement. I give, as a specimen, the pattern of the pavement of a *doorcka'ah*, such as I have above described, and a sketch of the fountain. The water which falls from the fountain is drained off from the pool by a pipe. There is generally, fronting the door, at the end of the *doorcka'ah*, a shelf of marble or common stone, about four feet high, called

\* The view of a *cka'ah*, opposite page 18, will serve to illustrate the description of the *mun'dar'ah*.

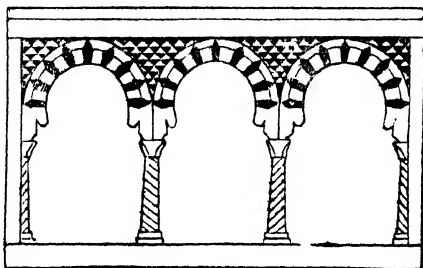




Pavement of a Dooreka'ah.—The width of this is about eight feet.



a *soof'feh*, supported by two or more arches, under which are placed utensils in ordinary use—such as perfuming vessels, and the basin and ewer which are used for washing before and after meals, and for the ablution preparatory to prayer: water-bottles, coffee-cups, &c., are placed upon the *soof'feh*. In handsome houses, the arches of the *soof'feh* are faced with marble and tile,



*Soof'feh.*

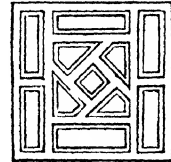
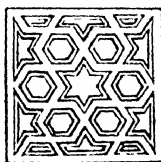
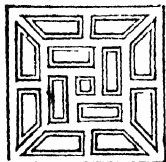
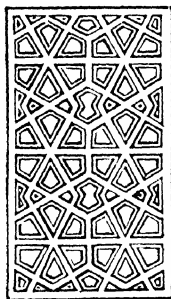
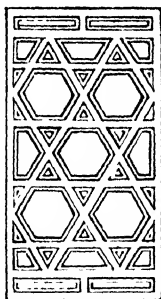
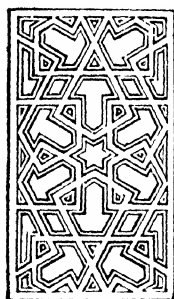
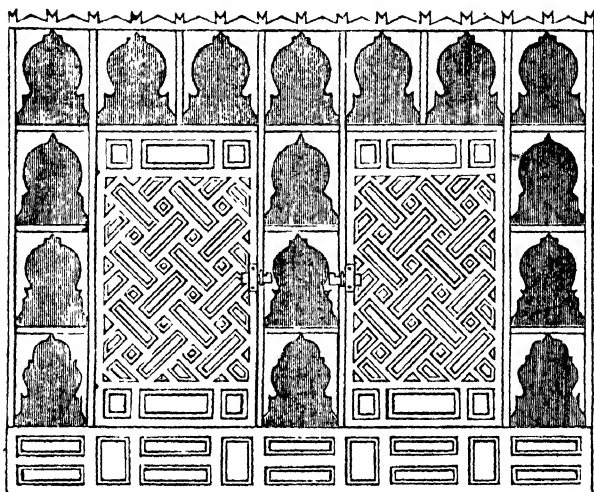
like the pool of the fountain, as represented in the sketch, p. 12; and sometimes the wall over it, to the height of about four feet or more, is also cased with similar materials; partly with large upright slabs, and partly with small pieces, like the *doorcka'ah*. The raised part of the floor of the room is called *leewa'n* (a corruption of "el-eewa'n," which signifies "any raised place to sit upon," and also "a palace"). Every person slips off his shoes on the *doorcka'ah* before he steps upon the *leewa'u* \*. The *leewa'n* is generally paved with common stone, and covered with a mat in summer, and a carpet over the mat in winter; and has a mattress

\* One of the chief reasons of the custom here mentioned is, to avoid defiling a mat or carpet upon which prayer is usually made. This, as many authors have observed, illustrates passages of the Scriptures,—Exodus, iii. 5, and Joshua, v. 15.



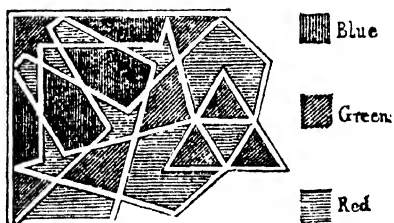
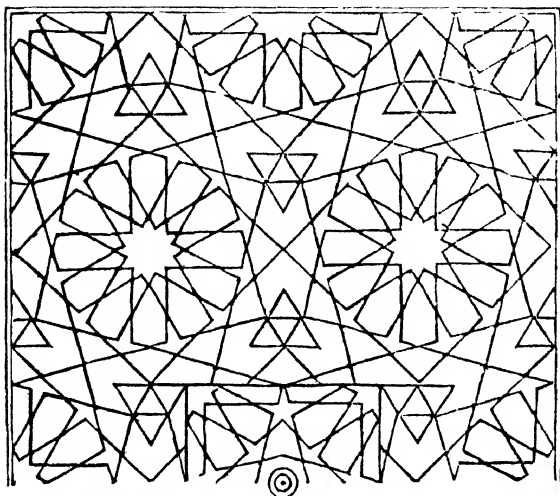
and cushions placed against each of its three walls, composing what is called a *deewa'n*, or divan. The mattress, which is generally about three feet wide, and three or four inches thick, is placed either on the ground or on a raised frame; and the cushions, which are usually of a length equal to the width of the mattress, and of a height equal to half that measure, lean against the wall. Both mattresses and cushions are stuffed with cotton, and are covered with printed calico, cloth, or some more expensive stuff. The walls are plastered and white-washed. There are generally, in the walls, two or three shallow cupboards, the doors of which are composed of very small panels, on account of the heat and dryness of the climate, which cause wood to warp and shrink as if it were placed in an oven; for which reason the doors of the apartments also are constructed in the same manner. We observe great variety and much ingenuity displayed in the different modes in which these small panels are formed and disposed. A few specimens are here introduced. The ceiling over the *leewa'n* is of wood, with carved beams, generally about a foot apart, partially painted, and sometimes gilt. But that part of the ceiling which is over the *doorcka'ah*, in a handsome house is usually more richly decorated: here, instead of beams, numerous thin strips of wood are nailed upon the planks, forming patterns curiously complicated, yet perfectly regular, and having a highly ornamental effect. I give a sketch of the half of a ceiling thus decorated, but not in the most complicated style. The strips are painted yellow, or gilt; and the spaces within, painted green, red, and blue\*. In the example which I have



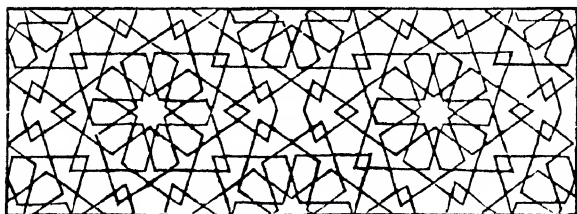


Specimens of Panel-work.—These are represented on a scale of one inch to twenty-four or thirty.





Ceiling of a Doorcka'ah.—About eight feet wide.



Ceiling of a projecting Window.—The dimensions of this are about eight feet by three.

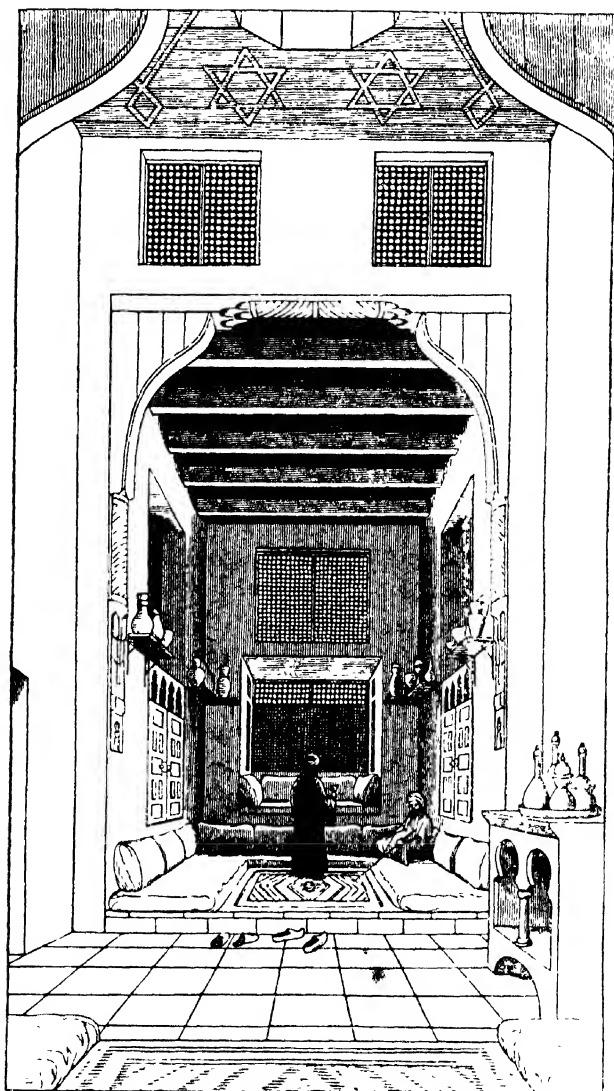


inserted, the colours are as indicated in a sketch of a portion of the same on a larger scale, which is prefixed, excepting in the square in the centre of the ceiling, where the strips are black, upon a yellow ground. From the centre of this square a chandelier is often suspended. There are many patterns of a similar kind; and the colours generally occupy similar places with regard to each other; but in some houses these ceilings are not painted. The ceiling of a projecting window is often ornamented in the same manner. A sketch of one is here added. Good taste is evinced by only decorating in this manner parts which are not always before the eyes; for to look long at so many lines intersecting each other in various directions would be painful.

In some houses (as in that which is the subject of the engraving opposite page 11) there is another room, called a *Muck''ad*, for the same use as the *mun'dar'ah*, having an open front, with two or more arches, and a low railing; and also, on the ground-floor, a square recess, called a *Tukhtabo'sh*, with an open front, and generally a pillar to support the wall above: its floor is a paved *leewa'n*; and there is a long wooden sofa placed along one, or two, or each, of its three walls. The court, during the summer, is frequently sprinkled with water, which renders the surrounding apartments agreeably cool—or at least those on the ground-floor. All the rooms are furnished in the same manner as that first described.

Among the upper apartments, or those of the *Hharee'm*, there is generally one called a *Cka'ah*, which is particularly lofty. It has two *leewa'ns*—one on each hand of a person entering: one of these is generally larger than the other, and is the more honourable part.





А Ска'аh.







A portion of the roof of this saloon, the part which is over the *doorcka'ah* that divides the two *leewa'ns*, is a little elevated above the rest; and has, in the centre, a small lantern, called *mem'ruck*, the sides of which are composed of lattice-work, like the windows before described, and support a cupola. The *doorcka'ah* is commonly without a fountain; but is often paved in a similar manner to that of the *mun'dar'ah*; which the *cka'ah* also resembles in having a handsome soof'feh, and cupboards of curious panel-work. There is besides, in this and some other apartments, a narrow shelf of wood, extending along two or each of the three walls which bound the *leewa'n*, about seven feet or more from the floor, just above the cupboards; but interrupted in some parts—at least in those parts where the windows are placed: upon this are arranged several vessels of china, not so much for general use as for ornament\*. All the apartments are lofty, generally fourteen feet or more in height; but the *cka'ah* is the largest and most lofty room, and in a large house it is a noble saloon.

In several of the upper rooms, in the houses of the wealthy, there are, besides the windows of lattice-work, others of coloured glass, representing bunches of flowers, peacocks, and other gay and gaudy objects, or merely fanciful patterns, which have a pleasing effect. These coloured glass windows, which are termed *ckum'aree'yehs*, are mostly from a foot and a half to two feet and a half in height, and from one to two feet in width; and

\* In the larger houses, and some others, there is also, adjoining the principal saloon, an elevated closet, designed as an orchestra, for female singers. A description of this will be found in the chapter on Music.



are generally placed along the upper part of the projecting lattice-window, in a row; or above that kind of window, disposed in a group, so as to form a large square; or elsewhere in the upper parts of the walls, usually singly, or in pairs, side by side. They are composed of small pieces of glass, of various colours, set in rims of fine plaster, and enclosed in a frame of wood. On the plastered walls of some apartments are rude paintings of the temple of Mek'keh, or of the tomb of the Prophet, or of flowers and other objects, executed by native Moos'lim artists, who have not the least notion of the rules of perspective, and who consequently deface what they thus attempt to decorate. Sometimes, also, the walls are ornamented with Arabic inscriptions, of maxims, &c., which are more usually written on paper, in an embellished style, and enclosed in glazed frames. No chambers are furnished as bed-rooms. The bed, in the day-time, is rolled up, and placed on one side, or in an adjoining closet, called *khuz'neh*, which, in the winter, is a sleeping-place: in summer, many people sleep upon the house-top. A mat, or carpet, spread upon the raised part of the stone floor, and a *deewa'n*, constitute the complete furniture of a room. For meals, a round tray is brought in, and placed upon a low stool, and the company sit round it on the ground. There is no fire-place\*: the room is warmed, when necessary, by burning charcoal in a chafingdish. Many houses have, at the top, a sloping shed of boards, called a *mul'ckuf*†, directed towards

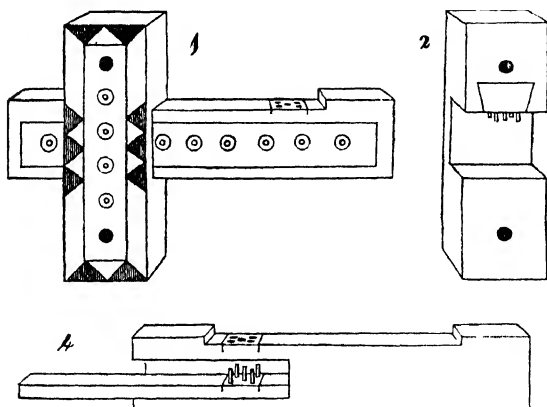
\* Excepting in the kitchen, in which are several small receptacles for fire, constructed on a kind of bench of brick.

† See again the engraving opposite page 11.



the north or north-west, to convey to a *fes'hhah* (or open apartment) below, the cool breezes which generally blow from those quarters.

Every door is furnished with a wooden lock, called a *dub'beh*; the mechanism of which is shown by a sketch here inserted. No. 1 in this sketch is a front view of the lock, with the bolt drawn back; Nos. 2, 3, and 4, are back views of the separate parts, and the key. A



Wooden Lock.

number of small iron pins (four, five, or more) drop into corresponding holes in the sliding bolt, as soon as the latter is pushed into the hole or staple of the door-post. The key, also, has small pins, made to correspond with the holes, into which they are introduced to open the lock: the former pins being thus pushed up, the bolt may be drawn back. The wooden lock of a street-door is commonly about fourteen inches long\*: those of the doors of apartments, cupboards, &c., are about seven,

\* This is the measure of the sliding bolt.



or eight, or nine inches. The locks of the gates of quarters, public buildings, &c., are of the same kind, and mostly two feet, or even more, in length. It is not difficult to pick this kind of lock.

In the plan of almost every house there is an utter want of regularity. The apartments are generally of different heights—so that a person has to ascend or descend one, two, or more steps, to pass from one chamber to another adjoining it. The principal aim of the architect is to render the house as private as possible; particularly that part of it which is inhabited by the women; and not to make any window in such a situation as to overlook the apartments of another house. Another object of the architect, in building a house for a person of wealth or rank, is to make a secret door (*ba'b sirr*), from which the tenant may make his escape in case of danger from an arrest, or an attempt at assassination—or by which to give access and egress to a paramour; and it is also common to make a hiding-place for treasure (called *mukh'ba*) in some part of the house. In the *hharee'm* of a large house, there is generally a bath, which is heated in the same manner as the public baths.

Another style of building has lately been very generally adopted for houses of the more wealthy. These do not differ much from those already described, excepting in the windows, which are of glass, and placed almost close together. Each window of the *hharee'm* has, outside, a sliding frame of close wooden trellis-work, to cover the lower half. The numerous glass windows are ill adapted to a hot climate.

¶ When shops occupy the lower part of the buildings in a street (as is generally the case in the great thorough-



fares of the metropolis, and in some of the by-streets), the superstructure is usually divided into distinct lodgings, and is termed *rub'ā*. These lodgings are separate from each other, as well as from the shops below, and let to families who cannot afford the rent of a whole house. Each lodging in a *rub'ā* comprises one or two sitting and sleeping-rooms, and generally a kitchen and latrina. It seldom has a separate entrance from the street; one entrance and one staircase usually admitting to a range of several lodgings. The apartments are similar to those of the private houses first described. They are never let ready-furnished; and it is very seldom that a person who has not a wife or female slave is allowed to reside in them, or in any private house: such a person (unless he have parents or other near relations to dwell with) is usually obliged to take up his abode in a *Weka'llah*, which is a building chiefly designed for the reception of merchants and their goods. Franks, however, are now exempted from this restriction.

Very few large or handsome houses are to be seen in Egypt, excepting in the metropolis and some other towns. The dwellings of the lower orders, particularly those of the peasants, are of a very mean description: they are mostly built of unbaked bricks, cemented together with mud. Some of them are mere hovels. The greater number, however, comprise two or more apartments; though very few are two stories high. In one of these apartments, in the houses of the peasants in Lower Egypt, there is generally an oven (*foorn*), at the end farthest from the entrance, and occupying the whole width of the chamber. It resembles a wide bench or seat, and is about breast-high: it is constructed of brick and mud; the roof arched within, and flat on



the top. The inhabitants of the house, who seldom have any night-covering during the winter, sleep upon the top of the oven, having previously lighted a fire within it; or the husband and wife only enjoy this luxury, and the children sleep upon the floor. The chambers have small apertures high up in the walls, for the admission of light and air—sometimes furnished with a grating of wood. The roofs are formed of palm branches and palm leaves, or of millet stalks, &c., laid upon rafters of the trunk of the palm, and covered with a plaster of mud and chopped straw. The furniture consists of a mat or two to sleep upon, a few earthen vessels, and a hand-mill to grind the corn. In many villages, large pigeon-houses, of a square form, but with the walls slightly inclining inwards (like many of the ancient Egyptian buildings), or of the form of a sugar-loaf, are constructed upon the roofs of the huts, with crude brick, pottery, and mud \*. Most of the villages of Egypt are situated upon eminences of rubbish, which rise a few feet above the reach of the inundation, and are surrounded by palm trees, or have a few of these trees in their vicinity. The rubbish which they occupy chiefly consists of the materials of former huts, and seems to increase in about the same degree as the level of the alluvial plains and the bed of the river.

In a country where neither births nor deaths are registered, it is next to impossible to ascertain, with precision, the amount of the population. A few years ago, a calculation was made, founded on the number of houses in Egypt, and the supposition that the inha-

\* The earthen pots used in the construction of these pigeon-houses are of an oval form, with a wide mouth, which is placed outwards, and a small hole at the other end. Each pair of pigeons occupies a separate pot.



bitants of each house in the metropolis amount to eight persons, and in the provinces to four. This computation approximates, I believe, very nearly to the truth; but personal observation and inquiry incline me to think that the houses of such towns as Alexandria, Boo'la'ck, and Musr el-'Atee'ckah contain each, on the average, at least five persons: Rashee'd (or Rosetta) is half deserted; but as to the crowded town of Dimya't (or Damietta), we must reckon as many as six persons to each house, or our estimate will fall far short of what is generally believed to be the number of its inhabitants. The addition of one or two persons to each house in the above-mentioned towns will, however, make little difference in the computation of the whole population of Egypt, which was found, by this mode of reckoning, to amount to rather more than two millions and a half; but it is now much reduced. Of 2,500,000 souls, say 1,200,000 are males; and one-third of this number (400,000) men fit for military service: from this latter number the present Ba'sha of Egypt has taken, at the least, 200,000 (that is, one-half of the most serviceable portion of the male population) to form and recruit his armies of regular troops, and for the service of his navy. The further loss caused by withdrawing so many men from their wives, or preventing their marrying, during ten years, must surely far exceed 300,000: consequently, the present population may be calculated as less than two millions. The numbers of the several classes of which the population is mainly composed are nearly as follow:—

Moos'lim Egyptians (fella'hhee'n, or peasants, and townspeople) . . .	1,750,000
Christian Egyptians (Copts) . . .	150,000
'Osma'nlees, or Turks . . . . .	10,000



Syrians . . . . .	5,000
Greeks . . . . .	5,000
Armenians . . . . .	2,000
Jews . . . . .	5,000

Of the remainder (namely, Arabians, Western Arabs, Nubians, Negro slaves, Memloo'ks [or white male slaves], female white slaves, Franks, &c.), amounting to about 70,000, the respective numbers are very uncertain and variable. The Arabs of the neighbouring deserts ought not to be included among the population of Egypt\*.

Cairo, I have said, contains about 240,000 inhabitants†. We should be greatly deceived if we judged of the population of this city from the crowds that we meet in the principal thoroughfare-streets and markets: in most of the by-streets and quarters, very few passengers are seen. Nor should we judge from the extent of the city and suburbs; for there are within the walls many vacant places, some of which, during the season of the inundation, are lakes (as the Bir'ket el-Ezbekee'yeh, Bir'ket el-Feel, &c.) The gardens, several burial-grounds, the courts of houses, and the mosques, also occupy a considerable space. Of the inhabitants of the metropolis, about 190,000 are Egyptian Moos'lims;

\* The Moos'lim Egyptians, Copts, Syrians, and Jews of Egypt, with few exceptions, speak no language but the Arabic, which is also the language generally used by the foreigners settled in this country. The Nubians, among themselves, speak their own dialects.

† The population of Cairo has increased to this amount, from about 200,000, within the last three or four years. Since the computation here stated was made, the plague of this year (1835) has destroyed not fewer than one-third of its inhabitants, as before mentioned; but this deficiency will be rapidly supplied from the villages.



about 10,000, Copts; 3,000 or 4,000, Jews; and the rest, strangers from various countries\*.

The population of Egypt in the times of the Pharoahs was probably about six or seven millions†. The produce of the soil in the present age would suffice, if none were exported, for the maintenance of a population amounting to 4,000,000; and if all the soil which is capable of cultivation were sown, the produce would be sufficient for the maintenance of 8,000,000. But this would be the utmost number that Egypt could maintain in years of plentiful inundation: I therefore compute the ancient population, at the time when agriculture was in a very flourishing state, to have amounted to what I first stated; and must suppose it to have been scarcely more than half as numerous in the times of the Ptolemies, and at later periods, when a great quantity of corn was annually exported‡. This calculation agrees with what Diodorus Siculus says (in lib. i., cap. 31); namely, that Egypt contained, in the times of the ancient kings, 7,000,000 inhabitants, and in his own time not less than 3,000,000.

\* About one-third of the population of the metropolis consists of adult males. Of this number (or 80,000) about 30,000 are merchants, petty shop-keepers, and artisans; 20,000, domestic servants; 15,000, common labourers, porters, &c.: the remainder chiefly consists of military and civil servants of the government.

† I place but little reliance on the accounts of ancient authors on this subject.

‡ It has been suggested to me, that, if corn was exported, something of equal value was imported; and that the exportation of corn, or anything else, would give a stimulus to industry and to population: but I do not know what could be imported that would fill up the measure of the food necessary to sustain a population much greater than that which would consume the corn retained.



How different, now, is the state of Egypt from what it might be; possessing a population of scarcely more than one quarter of the number that it might be rendered capable of supporting! How great a change might be effected in it by a truly enlightened government; by a prince who (instead of oppressing the peasantry by depriving them of their lands, and by his monopolies of the most valuable productions of the soil; by employing the best portion of the population to prosecute his ambitious schemes of foreign conquest, and another large portion in the vain attempt to rival European manufactures) would give his people a greater interest in the cultivation of the fields, and make Egypt what nature designed it to be—almost exclusively an agricultural country! Its produce of cotton alone would more than suffice to procure all the articles of foreign manufacture, and all the natural productions of foreign countries, that the wants of its inhabitants demand\*.

\* During the present year, 1835, more than 100,000 bales of cotton (each bale weighing a hundred-weight and three quarters) have been shipped at Alexandria. The price paid for this quantity by the merchants exceeded 700,000*l*. The quantity exported last year was 34,000 bales, which is considerably less than usual.—The policy above recommended is strongly advocated by Ibraheem Ba'sha.



## CHAPTER I.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DRESS OF THE  
MOOS'LIM EGYPTIANS.

MOOS'LIMS of Arabian origin have, for many centuries, mainly composed the population of Egypt; they have changed its language, laws, and general manners; and its metropolis they have made the principal seat of Arabian learning and arts. To the description of this people, and especially of the middle and higher classes in the Egyptian capital, will be devoted the chief portion of the present work. In every point of view, Musr (or Cairo) must be regarded as the first Arab city of our age; and the manners and customs of its inhabitants are particularly interesting as they are a combination of those which prevail most generally in the towns of Arabia, Syria, and the whole of Northern Africa, and in a great degree in Turkey. There is no other place in which we can obtain so complete a knowledge of the most civilized classes of the Arabs. From statements made in the introduction to this work, it appears that Moos'lim Egyptians (or Arab-Egyptians) compose nearly four-fifths of the population of the metropolis (which is computed to amount to about 240,000), and just seven-eighths of that of all Egypt.

The Moos'lim Egyptians are descended from various



Arab tribes and families which have settled in Egypt at different periods; mostly soon after the conquest of this country by 'Amr, its first Arab governor; but by inter-marriages with the Copts and others who have become proselytes to the faith of El-Isla'm, as well as by the change from a life of wandering to that of citizens or of agriculturists, their personal characteristics have, by degrees, become so much altered, that there is a strongly-marked difference between them and the natives of Arabia. Yet they are to be regarded as not less genuine Arabs than the townspeople of Arabia itself; among whom has long and very generally prevailed a custom of keeping Abyssinian female slaves, either instead of marrying their own countrywomen, or (as is commonly the case with the opulent) in addition to their Arab wives; so that they bear almost as strong a resemblance to the Abyssinians as to the Bed'aweess, or Arabs of the Desert. The term '*Ar'ab*', it should here be remarked, is used, wherever the Arabic language is spoken, only to designate the Bed'aweess, collectively: in speaking of a tribe, or of a small number of those people, the word '*Orba'n*' is also used; and a single individual is called *Bed'awee* \*. In the metropolis and other towns of Egypt, the distinction of tribes is almost wholly lost; but it is preserved among the peasants, who have retained many Bed'awee customs, of which I shall have to speak. The native Moos'lim inhabitants of Cairo commonly call themselves *El-Musreeyee'n*, *Owla'd Musr* (or *Ah'l Musr*), and *Owla'd el-Bel'ed*, which signify people of Musr, children of Musr, and children of the town: the singular forms of these appellations

\* Feminine, *Bedawee'yeh*.



are *Mus'ree*, *Ib'n Musr*, and *Ibn el-Bel'ed*\*. Of these three terms, the last is most common in the town itself. The country people are called *El-Fella'hhee'n* (or the Agriculturists), in the singular *Fella'hh*†. The Turks often apply this term to the Egyptians in general in an abusive sense, as meaning "the boors," or "the clowns;" and improperly stigmatize them with the appellation of *Ah'l Far'oo'n*‡, or "the People of Pharoah."

In general, the Moos'lim Egyptians attain the height of about five feet eight, or five feet nine inches. Most of the children under nine or ten years of age have spare limbs and a distended abdomen; but, as they grow up, their forms rapidly improve: in mature age, most of them are remarkably well-proportioned; the men, muscular and robust; the women, very beautifully formed and plump; and neither sex is too fat. I have never seen corpulent persons among them, excepting a few in the metropolis and other towns, rendered so by a life of inactivity. In Cairo, and throughout the northern provinces, those who have not been much exposed to the sun have a yellowish, but very clear complexion, and soft skin; the rest are of a considerably darker and coarser complexion. The people of Middle Egypt are of a more tawny colour, and those of the more southern provinces are of a deep bronze or brown complexion—darkest towards Nubia, where the climate is hottest. In general, the countenance of the Moos'lim Egyptian (I here speak of the *men*) is of a fine oval form: the forehead, of moderate size, seldom high, but

\* In the feminine, *Musree'yeh*, *Bin't Musr*, and *Bint el-Bel'ed*.

† Feminine, *Fella'hhah*.

‡ Thus, commonly pronounced for *Fir'ow'n*.



generally prominent: the eyes are deep sunk, black, and brilliant: the nose is straight, but rather thick: the mouth, well formed: the lips are rather full than otherwise: the teeth, particularly beautiful\*: the beard is commonly black and curly, but scanty. I have seen very few individuals of this race with grey eyes; or rather, few persons supposed to be of this race; for I am inclined to think them the offspring of Arab women by Turks or other foreigners. The Fella'hhee'n, from constant exposure to the sun, have a habit of half-shutting their eyes: this is also characteristic of the Bed'awees. Great numbers of the Egyptians are blind in one or both eyes. They generally shave that part of the cheek which is above the lower jaw, and likewise a small space under the lower lip, leaving, however, the hairs which grow in the middle under the mouth; or, instead of shaving these parts, they pluck out the hair. They also shave a part of the beard under the chin. Very few shave the rest of their beards†, and none their mustaches. The former they suffer to grow to the length of about a hand's breadth below the chin (such, at least, is the general rule, and such was the custom of the Prophet); and

\* Tooth-ache is, however, a very common disorder in Egypt, as it was in ancient times: this, at least, was probably the case, as Herodotus (lib. ii., cap. 84) mentions dentists among the classes of Egyptian physicians. It is, of course, most prevalent among the higher orders.

† A few of the servants, and some others, shave their beards. The respect which Orientals in general pay to the beard has often been remarked. They swear by it, and say that a man disgraces: by an evil action. The punishment recorded in 2 Samuel, ch. x., v. 4, has frequently been practised in modern times, but not so often as the shaving of the whole of the beard.



their mustaches they do not allow to become so long as to incommode them in eating and drinking. The practice of dyeing the beard is not common ; for a grey beard is much respected. The Egyptians shave all the rest of the hair, or leave only a small tuft (called *shoo'sheh*) upon the crown of the head. This last custom (which is almost universal among them), I have been told, originated in the fear that if the Moos'lim should fall into the hands of an infidel, and be slain, the latter might cut off the head of his victim, and, finding no hair by which to hold it, put his impure hand into the mouth, in order to carry it ; for the beard might not be sufficiently long\*. With the like view of avoiding impurity, the Egyptians observe other customs, which need not here be described†. Many men of the lower orders, and some others, make blue marks upon their arms, and sometimes upon the hands and chest, as the women, in speaking of whom this operation will be described.

The dress of the men of the middle and higher classes consists of the following articles‡. First, a pair of full drawers (in Arabic, *liba's*) of linen or cotton, tied round the body by a running string or band (called *dik'keh* or *tik'keh*), the ends of which are embroidered with coloured silks, though concealed by the outer dress. The drawers descend a little below the knees, or to the ankles ; but many of the Arabs will not

\* Persons of literary and religious professions generally disapprove of the *shoo'sheh*.

† They are mentioned in the "Mishcat-ul-Masabih," vol. ii., p. 359, and are observed by both sexes.

‡ The fashion of their dress remains almost the same during the lapse of centuries.



wear long drawers, because prohibited by the Prophet. Next is worn a shirt (*ckamee's*), with very full sleeves, reaching to the wrist: it is made of linen, of a loose, open texture, or of cotton stuff, or of muslin, or silk, or of a mixture of silk and linen or cotton, in stripes, but all white\*. Over this, in winter, or in cool weather, most persons wear a *soodey'ree*, which is a short vest of cloth, or of striped coloured silk and cotton, without sleeves. Over the shirt and the *soodey'ree*, or the former alone, is worn a long vest of striped silk and cotton † (called *ckufta'n*, or more commonly *ckoof-ta'n*), descending to the ankles, with long sleeves extending a few inches beyond the fingers' ends, but divided from a point a little above the wrist, or about the middle of the fore-arm; so that the hand is generally exposed, though it may be concealed by the sleeve when necessary; for it is customary to cover the hands in the presence of a person of high rank. Round this vest is wound the girdle (*hheza'm*), which is a coloured shawl, or a long piece of white figured muslin. The ordinary outer robe is a long cloth coat, of any colour (called by the Turks *joob'beh*, but by the Egyptians *gib'beh*), the sleeves of which reach not quite to the wrist‡. Some persons also wear a *bence'sh*, or *ben'ish*; which is a robe of cloth, with long sleeves, like those of the *ckoof-ta'n*, but more ample§: it is, properly, a

\* The Prophet forbade men to wear silk clothing, but allowed women to do so. The prohibition is, however, attended to by very few modern Moos'lins, excepting the Wah'ha'bees.

† The stripes are seldom plain: they are generally figured or flowered.

‡ See the foremost figure in the accompanying engraving.

§ See the figure to the left in the same engraving.





Men of the Middle and Higher Classes.







robe of ceremony, and should be worn over the other cloth coat; but many persons wear it *instead* of the gib'beh\*. The head-dress consists, first, of a small, close-fitting cotton cap (called *ta'ckee'yeh*, or *'arackee'yeh*), which is often changed; next, a *turboo'sh*, which is a red cloth cap, also fitting closely to the head, with a tassel of dark blue silk at the crown; lastly, a long piece of white muslin, generally figured, or a Kash-mee'r shawl, which is wound round the *turboo'sh*. Thus is formed the turban, or *'ema'meh*. The Kash-mee'r shawl is seldom worn excepting in cool weather. Some persons wear two or three *turboo'shes*, one over another. A *sheree'f* (or descendant of the Prophet) wears a green turban, or is privileged to do so; but no other person; and it is not common for any but a *sheree'f* to wear a bright green dress. Stockings are not in use; but some few persons, in cold weather, wear woollen or cotton socks. The shoes (*murkoo'b*) are of thick red morocco, pointed and turning up at the toes. Some persons also wear inner shoes (called *mezz*, or more properly, *mez'd*†), of soft, yellow morocco, and with soles of the same: the *murkoo'b* are taken off on stepping upon a carpet or mat; but not the *mezz*: for this reason, the former are often worn turned down at the heel.

On the little finger of the right hand is worn a seal.

\* In cold or cool weather a kind of black woollen cloak, called *'abba'yeh*, is commonly worn(a). Sometimes this is drawn over the head. In winter also many persons wrap a muslin or other shawl (such as they use for a turban) about the head and shoulders.

† From the Turkish, *mest*.

(a) See the next engraving, in which is represented a striped *'abba'yeh*



ring (*kha'tim*), which is generally of silver, with a cornelian, or other stone, upon which is engraved the wearer's name: the name is accompanied by the words "his servant" (signifying "the servant, or worshipper of God"), and often by other words expressive of the person's trust in God, &c.\* The Prophet disapproved of gold; therefore few Moos'lims wear gold rings; but the women have various ornaments (rings, bracelets, &c.) of that precious metal. The seal-ring is used for signing letters and other writings; and its impression is considered more valid than the sign-manual †. A little ink is dabbed upon it with one of the fingers, and it is pressed upon the paper—the person who uses it having first touched his tongue with another finger, and moistened the place in the paper which is to be stamped. Almost every person who can afford it has a seal-ring, even though he be a servant. The regular scribes, literary men, and many others, wear a silver, brass, or copper *dawa'yeh*, which is a case with receptacles for ink and pens, stuck in the girdle ‡. Some have, in the place of this, or in addition to it, a case-knife, or a dagger.

The Egyptian generally takes his pipe with him wherever he goes (unless it be to the mosque), or has a servant to carry it, though it is not a common custom to smoke while riding or walking. The tobacco-purse he crams into his bosom, the *ckoofta'n* being large, and lapping over in front. A handkerchief, embroidered with coloured silks and gold, and neatly folded, is also

\* See St. John's Gospel, iii. 33; and Exodus, xxix. 30.

† Therefore, giving the ring to another person is the utmost mark of confidence.—See Genesis, xli. 42.

‡ This is a very ancient custom.—See Ezekiel, ix. 2, 3, 11.









Men of the Lower Classes.



placed in the bosom. Many persons of the middle orders, who wish to avoid being thought rich, conceal such a dress as I have described by a long black gown of cotton, similar to the gown worn by most persons of the lower classes.

The costume of the men of the lower orders is very simple. These, if not of the very poorest class, wear a pair of drawers, and a long and full shirt or gown of blue linen or cotton, or of brown woollen stuff (the former called *'er'ee*, and the latter *zaaboo't*), open from the neck nearly to the waist, and having wide sleeves\*. Over this, some wear a white or red woollen girdle. Their turban is generally composed of a white, red, or yellow woollen shawl, or of a piece of coarse cotton or muslin, wound round a *turboo'sh*, under which is a white or brown felt cap (called *lib'deh*) ; but many are so poor as to have no other cap than the *lib'deh*—no turban, nor even drawers, nor shoes, but only the blue or brown shirt, or merely a few rags ; while many, on the other hand, wear a *soodey'ree* under the blue shirt ; and some, particularly servants in the houses of great men, wear a white shirt, a *soodey'ree*, and a *ckoofta'n* or *gib'beh*, or both, and the blue shirt over all. The full sleeves of this shirt are sometimes drawn up, by means of cords, which pass round each shoulder and cross behind, where they are tied in a knot. This custom is adopted by servants (particularly grooms), who have cords of crimson or dark-blue silk for this purpose. In cold weather, many persons of the lower classes wear an *'abba'yeh*, like that before described, but coarser ; and sometimes, instead of being black,

\* The *zaaboo't* is mostly worn in the winter.



having broad stripes, brown and white, or blue and white, but the latter rarely. Another kind of cloak, more full than the 'abba'yeh, of black or deep-blue woollen stuff, is also very commonly worn: it is called *diffee'yeh*\*. The shoes are of red or yellow morocco, or of sheep-skin.

Several different forms of turbans are represented in some of the engravings which illustrate this work. The Moos'lims are distinguished by the colours of their turbans from the Copts and the Jews, who (as well as other subjects of the Turkish Soolta'n who are not Moos'lims) wear black, blue, grey, or light-brown turbans, and generally dull-coloured dresses. The distinction of sects, families, dynasties, &c., among the Moos'lim Arabs, by the colour of the turban and other articles of dress, is of very early origin. When the Ima'm Ibra-hee'm Ib'n Mohham'mad, asserting his pretensions to the dignity of Khalee'feh†, was put to death by the Oom'awee Khalee'feh Murwa'n, many persons of the family of El-'Abba's assumed black clothing, in testimony of their sorrow for his fate; and hence the black dress and turban (which latter is now characteristic, almost solely, of Christian and Jewish tributaries to the 'Osma'nlee, or Turkish, Soolta'n) became the distinguishing costume of the 'Abba'see Khalee'fehs, and of their officers. When an officer under this dynasty was disgraced, he was made to wear a white dress. White was adopted by the false prophet Mooockan'na', to dis-

\* A kind of blue and white plaid (called *mila'yeh*) is also worn by some men, but more commonly by women, in the account of whose dress it will be further described: the men throw it over the shoulders, or wrap it about the body.

† Commonly written by English authors "Caliph."



tinguish his party from the 'Abba'sees; and the Fawa'tim of Egypt (or Khalee'fehs of the race of Fa'timeh), as rivals of the 'Abba'sees, wore a white costume. El-Mel'ik El-Ash'raf Shaaba'n, a Soolta'n of Egypt (who reigned from the year of the Flight 764 to 778, or A.D. 1362 to 1376), was the first who ordered the *sheree'fs* to distinguish themselves by the green turban and dress. Some durwee'shes of the sect of the Rifa'ees, and a few, but very few, other Moos'lims, wear a turban of black woollen stuff, or of a very deep olive-coloured (almost black) muslin; but that of the Copts, Jews, &c., is generally of black or blue muslin, or linen. There are not many different *forms* of turbans now worn in Egypt: that worn by most of the servants is very formal. The kind common among the middle and higher classes of the tradesmen and other citizens of the metropolis and large towns is also very formal, but less so than that just before alluded to. The Turkish turban worn in Egypt is of a more elegant mode. The Syrian is distinguished by its width. The 'ool'ama, and men of religion and letters in general, used to wear, as some do still, one particularly wide and formal, called a *moock'leh*. The turban is much respected. In the



The Moock'leh.



houses of the more wealthy classes, there is usually a chair (called *koor'see el-'ema'meh*) on which it is placed at night. This is often sent with the furniture of a bride. It is common for a lady to have one upon which to place her head-dress. This kind of chair is never used for any other purpose. As an instance of the respect paid to the turban, one of my friends mentioned to me that an 'a'lim\* being thrown off his donkey in a street of this city, his moock'leh fell off, and rolled along for several yards; whereupon the passengers ran after it, crying, "Lift up the crown of El-Isla'm!" while the poor 'a'lim, whom no one came to assist, called out in anger, "Lift up the *sheykh*† of El-Isla'm!"

The general form and features of the *women* must now be described. From the age of about fourteen to that of eighteen or twenty they are generally models of beauty in body and limbs; and in countenance most of them are pleasing, and many exceedingly lovely: but soon after they have attained their perfect growth, they rapidly decline; the bosom early loses all its beauty, acquiring, from the relaxing nature of the climate, an excessive length and flatness in its forms, even while the face retains its full charms; and though, in most other respects, time does not commonly so soon nor so much deform them, at the age of forty it renders many who in earlier years possessed considerable attractions absolutely ugly. In the Egyptian females the forms of womanhood begin to develop

\* This appellation (of which *'ool'ama* is the plural) signifies a man of science or learning.

† "Sheykh" here signifies *master*, or *doctor*.



themselves about the ninth or tenth year: at the age of fifteen or sixteen they generally attain their highest degree of perfection. With regard to their complexions, the same remarks apply to them as to the men, with only this difference, that their faces, being generally veiled when they go abroad, are not quite so much tanned as those of the men. They are characterized, like the men, by a fine oval countenance; though, in some instances, it is rather broad. The eyes, with very few exceptions, are black, large, and of a long almond-form, with long and beautiful lashes and an exquisitely soft, bewitching expression: eyes more beautiful can hardly be conceived: their charming effect is much heightened by the concealment of the other features (however pleasing the latter may be), and is rendered still more striking by a practice universal among the females of the higher and middle classes, and very common among those of the lower orders, which is that of blackening the edge of the eyelids, both above and below the eye, with a black powder called *kohhl*. This is a collyrium commonly com-

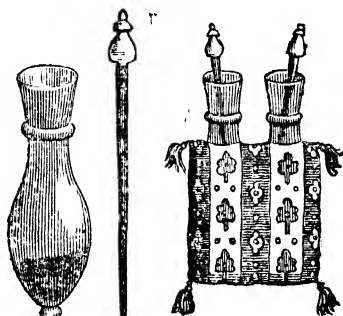


An Eye ornamented with *Kohhl*.

posed of the smoke-black which is produced by burning a kind of *liba'n*—an aromatic resin—a species of frankincense, used, I am told, in preference to the better kind of frankincense, as being cheaper, and equally good for this purpose. *Kohhl* is also prepared of the smoke-black produced by burning the shells of almonds. These two kinds, though believed to be beneficial to



the eyes, are used merely for ornament; but there are several kinds used for their real or supposed medical properties; particularly the powder of several kinds of lead ore\*; to which are often added sarcocolla†, long pepper‡, sugar-candy, fine dust of a Venetian sequin, and sometimes powdered pearls. Antimony, it is said, was formerly used for painting the edges of the eyelids. The kohhl is applied with a small probe, of wood, ivory, or silver, tapering towards the end, but blunt: this is moistened, sometimes with rose-water, then dipped in the powder, and drawn along the edges of the eyelids: it is called *mir'wed*; and the glass vessel in which the kohhl is kept, *mook'hhool'ah*. The custom



*Mook'hhool'ahs and Mir'weds*

These are represented on scales of one-third, and a quarter, of the real size.

of thus ornamenting the eyes prevailed among both sexes in Egypt in very ancient times: this is shown by the sculptures and paintings in the temples and tombs of this country; and kohhl-vessels, with the probes, and

\* Kohhl el-hhag'ar.

† 'Anzaroo't.

‡ 'Erck ed-dah'ab.



even with remains of the black powder, have often been found in the ancient tombs. I have two in my posses-



Ancient Vessel and Probe for Kohhl.

sion. But in many cases, the ancient mode of ornamenting with the kohhl was a little different from the modern, as shown by the subjoined sketch: I have,

An Eye and Eyebrow ornamented with Kohhl, as represented in ancient Paintings.

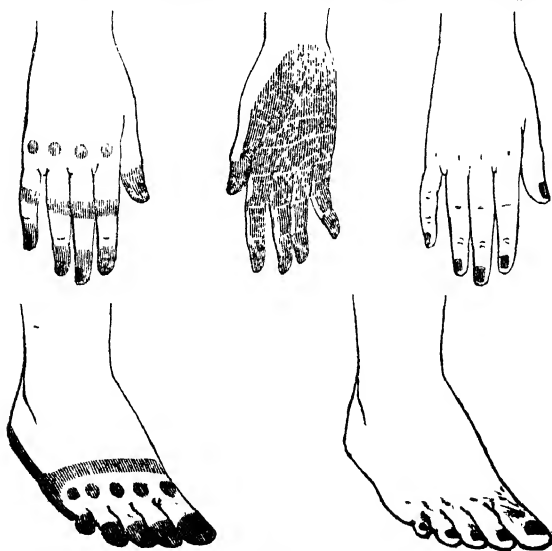
however, seen this ancient mode practised in the present day in the neighbourhood of Cairo; though I only remember to have noticed it in two instances. The same custom existed among the ancient Greek ladies and among the Jewish women in early times\*. The eyes of the Egyptian women are generally the most beautiful of their features. Countenances altogether handsome are far less common among this race than handsome figures; but I have seen among them faces distinguished by a style of beauty possessing such sweetness of expression, that they have struck me as exhibiting the perfection of female loveliness, and impressed

\* See 2d Kings, ix. 30 (where, in our common version, we find the words, "painted her face" for "painted her eyes"), and Ezekiel, xxiii. 40.



me with the idea (perhaps not false) that their equals could not be found in any other country: with such eyes as many of them have, the face must be handsome, if its other features be but moderately well formed\*. The nose is generally straight: the lips are mostly rather fuller than those of the men, but not in the least degree partaking of the negro character. The hair is of that deep, glossy black, which best suits all but fair complexions: in some instances it is rather coarse and crisp, but never woolly.

The females of the higher and middle classes, and many of the poorer women, stain certain parts of their hands and feet (which are, with very few exceptions,



Hands and Feet stained with Hhen'na.

\* Scissors are often used to reduce the width of the eye-brows, and to give them a more arched form.



beautifully formed) with the leaves of the hhen'na-tree\*, which impart a yellowish red, or deep orange colour. Many thus dye only the nails of the fingers and toes; others extend the dye as high as the first joint of each finger and toe; some also make a stripe along the next row of joints; and there are several other fanciful modes of applying the hhen'na; but the most common practice is to dye the tips of the fingers and toes as high as the first joint, and the whole of the inside of the hand and the sole of the foot †; adding, though not always, the stripe above-mentioned along the middle joints of the fingers, and a similar stripe a little above the toes. The hhen'na is prepared for this use merely by being powdered and mixed with a little water, so as to form a paste. Some of this paste being spread in the palm of the hand, and on other parts of it which are to be dyed, and the fingers being doubled, and their extremities inserted into the paste in the palm, the whole hand is tightly bound with linen, and remains thus during a whole night. In a similar manner it is applied to the feet. The colour does not disappear until after many days: it is generally renewed after about a fortnight or three weeks. This custom prevails not only in Egypt, but in several other countries of the East, which are supplied with hhen'na from the banks of the Nile. To the nails, the hhen'na imparts a more bright, clear, and permanent colour than to the skin. When this dye alone is applied to the nails, or to a larger portion of the fingers and toes,

\* *Lawsonia inermis*; also called "Egyptian privet."

† The application of this dye to the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet is said to have an agreeable effect upon the skin; particularly to prevent its being too tender and sensitive.



it may, with some reason, be regarded as an embellishment; for it makes the general complexion of the hand and foot appear more delicate; but many ladies stain their hands in a manner much less agreeable to our taste: by applying, immediately after the removal of the paste of *hhen'na*, another paste composed of quicklime, common smoke-black, and linseed-oil, they convert the tint of the *hhen'na* to a black, or to a blackish olive hue. Ladies in Egypt are often seen with their nails stained with this colour, or with their fingers of the same dark hue from the extremity to the first joint, red from the first to the second joint, and of the former colour from the second to the third joint; with the palm also stained in a similar manner, having a broad, dark stripe across the middle, and the rest left red; the thumb dark from the extremity to the first joint, and red from the first to the second joint. Some, after a more simple fashion, blacken the ends of the fingers and the whole of the inside of the hand.

Among the females of the lower orders, in the country-towns and villages of Egypt, and among the same classes in the metropolis, but in a less degree, prevails a custom somewhat similar to that above described: it consists in making indelible marks of a blue or greenish hue upon the face and other parts, or, at least, upon the front of the chin, and upon the back of the right hand, and often also upon the left hand, the right arm, or both arms, the feet, the middle of the bosom, and the forehead: the most common of these marks made upon the chin and hands are here represented. The operation is performed with several needles (generally seven) tied together: with these the skin is pricked in





A tattooed Girl.



Specimens of tattooing on the Chin.



Tattooed Hands and Foot.



the desired pattern: some smoke-black (of wood or oil), mixed with milk from the breast of a woman, is then rubbed in; and about a week after, before the skin has healed, a paste of the pounded fresh leaves of white beet or clover is applied, and gives a blue or greenish colour to the marks. It is generally performed at the age of about five or six years, and by gipsy-women. The term applied to it is *duck'ck*. Most of the females of the higher parts of Upper Egypt, who are of a very dark complexion, tattoo their lips instead of the parts above-mentioned; thus converting their natural colour to a dull, bluish hue, which, to the eye of a stranger, is extremely displeasing\*.

Another characteristic of the Egyptian women that should be here mentioned, is their upright carriage and gait. This is most remarkable in the female peasantry, owing, doubtless, in a great measure, to their habit of bearing a heavy earthen water-vessel, and other burthens, upon the head.

The dress of the women of the middle and higher orders is handsome and elegant. Their shirt is very full, like that of the men; but rather shorter; reaching not quite to the knees: it is also, generally, of the same kind of material as the men's shirt, or of coloured crape; sometimes black. A pair of very wide trousers (called *shintiya'n*), of a coloured, striped stuff of silk

\* The depilatory most commonly used by the Egyptian women is a kind of resin, called *liba'n sha'mee*, applied in a melted state: but this, they pretend, is not always necessary: by applying the blood of a bat to the skin of a newly-born female infant, on the parts where they wish no hair to grow, they assert that they accomplish this desire. A female upon whom this application has been made is termed *moowut'wut'ah*; from *wutwa't*, a bat.









A Lady in the Dress worn in private.



and cotton, or of printed, or worked, or plain white muslin, is tied round the hips, under the shirt, with a dik'keh: its lower extremities are drawn up and tied just below the knee with running strings; but it is sufficiently long to hang down to the feet, or almost to the ground, when attached in this manner. Over the shirt and shintiya'n is worn a long vest (called *yel'ek*), of the same material as the latter: it nearly resembles the ckoofa'n of the men; but is more tight to the body and arms: the sleeves also are longer; and it is made to button down the front, from the bosom to a little below the girdle, instead of lapping over: it is open, likewise, on each side, from the height of the hip, downwards. In general, the *yel'ek* is cut in such a manner as to leave half of the bosom uncovered, except by the shirt; but many ladies have it made more ample at that part; and, according to the most approved fashion, it should be of a sufficient length to reach to the ground, or should exceed that length by two or three inches, or more. A short vest (called *'an'ter'ee*), reaching only a little below the waist, and exactly resembling a *yel'ek* of which the lower part has been cut off, is sometimes worn instead of the latter. A square shawl, or an embroidered kerchief, doubled diagonally, is put loosely round the waist as a girdle; the two corners that are folded together hanging down behind. Over the *yel'ek* is worn a *gib'beh* of cloth, or velvet, or silk, usually embroidered with gold or with coloured silk: it differs in form from the *gib'beh* of the men chiefly in being not so wide; particularly in the fore part\*. Instead of this, a jacket (called *sal'tah*), gene-

\* It is of the same length as the *yel'ek*.



rally of cloth or velvet, and embroidered in the same manner as the gib'beh, is often worn. The head-dress consists of a ta'ckee'yeh and turboo'sh, with a square kerchief (called *far'oo'dee'yeh*) of printed or painted muslin, or one of crape, wound tightly round, composing what is called a *rub'tah*. Two or more such kerchiefs were commonly used, a short time since, and are still sometimes, to form the ladies' turban, but always wound in a high, flat shape, very different from that of the turban of the men. A kind of crown, called *choor's*, and other ornaments, are attached to the ladies' head-dress: descriptions and engravings of these and other ornaments of the women of Egypt will be found in the Appendix to this work. A long piece of white muslin embroidered at each end with coloured silks and gold, or of coloured crape ornamented with gold thread, lama, and spangles, rests upon the head, and hangs down behind, nearly or quite to the ground: this is called *tar'hah*—it is the head-veil: the face-veil I shall presently describe. The hair, excepting over the forehead and temples, is divided into numerous braids or plaits, generally from eleven to twenty-five in number, but always of an *uneven* number: these hang down the back. To each braid of hair are usually added three black silk cords, with little ornaments of gold, &c., attached to them. For a description of these, which are called *suf'a*, I refer to the Appendix. Over the forehead, the hair is cut rather short; but two full locks (called *muck'a'see's*) hang down on each side of the face: these are often curled in ringlets, and sometimes plaited\*. Few of the ladies of Egypt wear

\* Egyptian women swear by the side-lock (as men do by the





A Lady adorned with the Koor's and Suf'a, &c.—(The Hand is partially stained with Hhen'na.)













Ladies attired for Riding or Walking.



stockings or socks, but many of them wear *mezz* (or inner shoes), of yellow or red morocco, sometimes embroidered with gold: over these, whenever they step off the matted or carpeted part of the floor, they put on *ba'boo'g* (or slippers) of yellow morocco, with high, pointed toes; or use high wooden clogs or pattens (called *ckubcka'b*, or, more commonly, *ckoobcka'b*), generally from four to nine inches in height, and usually ornamented with mother-of-pearl, or silver, &c. These are always used in the bath by men and women; but not by many ladies at home: some ladies wear them merely to keep their skirts from trailing on the ground: others to make themselves appear tall. Such is the dress which is worn by the Egyptian ladies in the house.

The riding or walking attire is called *tezycce'reh*. Whenever a lady leaves the house she wears, in addition to what has been above described, first a large, loose gown (called *to'b*, or *seb'leh*), the sleeves of which are nearly equal in width to the whole length of the gown\*: it is of silk; generally of a pink, or rose, or violet colour. Next is put on the *boor'cho'*, or face-veil, which is a long strip of white muslin, concealing the whole of the face except the eyes, and reaching nearly to the feet. It is suspended at the top by a narrow band, which passes up the forehead, and which is sewed, as are also the two upper corners of the veil, to a band that is tied round the head. The lady then

beard), generally holding it when they utter the oath, *wa-hhaya't mucksoo'see*!

\* This is similar in form to the *to'b* of women of the lower orders, represented in the next engraving.



covers herself with a *hhab'arah*, which, for a married lady, is composed of two breadths of glossy, black silk, each ell-wide, and three yards long: these are sewed together at or near the selvages (according to the height of the person); the seam running horizontally, with respect to the manner in which it is worn: a piece of narrow, black riband is sewed inside the upper part, about six inches from the edge, to tie round the head. This covering is always worn in the manner shown by the accompanying sketch. The unmarried ladies wear a *hhab'arah* of white silk, or a shawl. Some females of the middle classes, who cannot afford to purchase a *hhab'arah*, wear instead of it an *eeza'r*; which is a piece of white calico, of the same form and size as the former, and is worn in the same manner. On the feet are worn short boots or socks (called *khoo'ff*), of yellow morocco, and over these, the *ba'boo'g*.

This dress, though chiefly designed for females of the higher classes, who are seldom seen in public on foot, is worn by many women who cannot often afford so far to imitate their superiors as to hire an ass to carry them. It is extremely inconvenient as a walking attire. Viewing it as a disguise for whatever is attractive or graceful in the person and adornments of the wearer, we should not find fault with it for being itself deficient in grace: we must remark, however; that, in one respect, it fails in accomplishing its main purpose; displaying the eyes, which are almost always beautiful; making them to appear still more so by concealing the other features, which are seldom of equal beauty; and often causing the stranger to imagine a defective face perfectly charming. The veil is of very remote anti-









Women and Children of the Lower Classes.









A Woman clad in the Mila'yeh, &c.



quity\* ; but, from the sculptures and paintings of the ancient Egyptians, it seems not to have been worn by the females of that nation.

The dress of a large proportion of those women of the lower orders who are not of the poorest class consists of a pair of trousers or drawers (similar in form to the shintiya'n of the ladies, but generally of plain white cotton or linen), a blue linen or cotton shirt (not quite so full as that of the men), a boor'cko' of a kind of coarse black crape, and a dark blue tar'hah of muslin or linen. Some wear, over the shirt, or instead of the latter, a linen to'b, of the same form as that of the ladies†. The sleeves of this are often turned up over the head ; either to prevent their being inconvenient, or to supply the place of a tar'hah‡. In addition to these articles of dress, many women who are not of the very poor classes, wear, as a covering, a kind of plaid, similar in form to the hhab'arah, composed of two pieces of cotton, woven in small chequers of blue and white, or cross stripes, with a mixture of red at each end. It is called *mila'yeh* : in general it is worn in the same manner as the hhab'arah ; but sometimes like the tar'hah§. The upper part of the black boor'cko' is often ornamented with false pearls, small gold coins, and other little flat ornaments of the same

\* See Genesis, xxiv. 65 ; and Isaiah, iii. 23. See also 1 Corinthians, xi. 10, and a marginal note on that verse.

† See the figure to the left in the first of the two engravings opposite this page.

‡ See the figure to the right in the same engraving.

§ There is a superior kind of *mila'yeh*, of silk, and of various colours ; but this is now seldom worn. The two pieces which compose the *mila'yeh* are sewed together.



metal (called *burck*); sometimes with a coral bead, and a gold coin beneath; also with small coins of base silver; and more commonly with a pair of chain tassels, of brass or silver (called '*oyoo'n*'), attached to the corners.



Ornamented black Veils—Only one of these (that to the right) is represented in its whole length.

A square black silk kerchief (called '*as'beh*'), with a border of red and yellow, is bound round the head, doubled diagonally, and tied with a single knot behind; or, instead of this, the *turboo'sh* and *far'oo'dee'yeh* are worn, though by very few women of the lower classes. The best kind of shoes worn by the females of the





The 'As'beh.

lower orders are of red morocco, turned up, but round, at the toes. The boor'cko' and shoes are most common in Cairo, and are also worn by many of the women throughout Lower Egypt; but in Upper Egypt, the boor'cko' is very seldom seen, and shoes are scarcely less uncommon. To supply the place of the former, when necessary, a portion of the tar'hhah is drawn before the face, so as to conceal nearly all the countenance excepting one eye. Many of the women of the lower orders, even in the metropolis, never conceal their faces. Throughout the greater part of Egypt the most common dress of the women merely consists of the blue shirt or to'b and tar'hhah. In the southern parts of Upper Egypt, chiefly above Akhmee'm, most of the women envelop themselves in a large piece of dark brown woollen stuff (called a *hhootalee'yeh*); wrapping it round the body, and attaching the upper parts together over each shoulder; and a piece of the same they use as a tar'hhah. This dull dress, though picturesque, is almost as disguising as the blue tinge which, as I have before mentioned, the women in these



parts of Egypt impart to their lips. Most of the women of the lower orders wear a variety of trumpery ornaments, such as ear-rings, necklaces, bracelets, &c., and sometimes a nose-ring. Descriptions and engravings of some of these ornaments will be given in the Appendix.

The women of Egypt deem it more incumbent upon them to cover the upper and back part of the head than the face; and more requisite to conceal the face than most other parts of the person. I have often seen in this country women but half covered with miserable \* rags; and several times, females in the prime of womanhood, and others in more advanced age, with only a narrow strip of rag bound round the hips.





A Woman of the Southern Province of Upper Egypt  
(Sketched at Thebes.)







## CHAPTER II.

## INFANCY AND EARLY EDUCATION.

It was a custom very common in Egypt, as in other Moos'lim countries, to consult an astrologer previously to giving a name to a child, and to be guided by his choice; but very few persons now conform with this old usage: the father makes choice of a name, and confers it without any ceremony. Boys are often named after the Prophet (Mohham'mad, Ahh'mad, or Moos'tuf'a), or some of the members of his family ('Al'ee, Hhas'an, Hhosey'n, &c.), or his eminent companions ('Om'ar, Ab'oo Bekr, 'Osma'n, 'Amr, &c.), or some of the prophets and patriarchs of early times (as Ibrahee'm, Is-hha'ek, Isma'ee'l, Yaackoo'b, Moos'a, Da'-oo'd, Sooleyma'n, &c.), or receive a name signifying "Servant of God," "Servant of the Compassionate," "Servant of the Powerful," &c. ('Abd Al'lah, 'Abd Er-Rahlma'n, 'Abd El-Cka'dir). Girls are mostly named after the wives or daughter of the Arabian Prophet, or after others of his family (as Khadee'geh, 'A'isheb, A'm'neh, Fa't'meh, Zey'neb), or are distinguished by a name implying that they are "beloved," "blessed," "precious," &c. (Mahhboo'beh, Mebroo'keh, Nefee'seh, &c.), or the name of a flower, or of some other pleasing object\*.

The dress of the children of the middle and higher

\* In Cairo, it is the fashion to change the first five female names here mentioned, and the last, into Khuddoo'geh, 'Eiyoo'sheb,



orders is similar to that of the parents, but generally slovenly. The children of the poor are either clad in a shirt and a cotton skull-cap or a turboo'sh, or (as is mostly the case in the villages) are left quite naked until the age of six or seven years or more, unless a bit of rag can be easily obtained to serve them as a partial covering. Those little girls who have only a piece of ragged stuff not large enough to cover both the head and body, generally prefer wearing it upon the head, and sometimes have the coquetry to draw a part of it before the face, as a veil, while the whole body is exposed. Little ladies, four or five years of age, mostly wear the white face-veil, like their mothers. When a boy is two or three years old, or often earlier, his head is shaved; a tuft of hair only being left on the crown, and another over the forehead\*: the heads of female infants are seldom shaven. The young children, of both sexes, are usually carried by their mothers and nurses, not in the arms, but on the shoulder, seated astride†, and sometimes, for a short distance, on the hip.

In the treatment of their children, the women of the

Ammoo'neh, Futoot'meh, Zennoo'beh, and Neffoo'seh; and some other names are changed to the same measure as these; which measure implies, in these cases, a superior degree of dignity.

\* It is customary among the peasants throughout a great part of Egypt, on the first occasion of shaving a child's head, to slay a victim, generally a goat, at the tomb of some saint in or near their village, and to make a feast with the meat, of which their friends, and any other persons who please, partake. This is most common in Upper Egypt, and among the tribes not very long established on the banks of the Nile. Their Pagan ancestors in Arabia observed this custom, and usually gave, as alms to the poor, the weight of the hair in silver. The victim was called 'ackee'ckah.

† See Isaiah, xlix. 22.



wealthier classes are remarkable for their excessive indulgence; and the poor, for the little attention they bestow, beyond supplying the absolute wants of nature. The mother is prohibited, by the Mohhamadan law, from weaning her child before the expiration of two years from the period of its birth, unless with the consent of her husband, which, I am told, is generally given after the first year or eighteen months. In the houses of the wealthy, the child, whether boy or girl, remains almost constantly confined in the hharee'm (or the women's apartments), or, at least, in the house: sometimes the boy continues thus an effeminate prisoner until a master, hired to instruct him daily, has taught him to read and write. When the ladies go out to pay a visit, or to take an airing, mounted on asses, the children generally go with them, each carried by a female slave or servant, or seated between her knees upon the fore part of the saddle; the female attendants, as well as the ladies, being usually borne by asses, and it being the custom of all the women to sit astride. But it is seldom that the children of the rich enjoy this slight diversion; their health suffers from confinement and pampering, and they are often rendered capricious, proud, and selfish. The women of the middle classes are scarcely less indulgent mothers. The estimation in which the wife is held by her husband, and even by her acquaintance, depends, in a great degree, upon her fruitfulness, and upon the preservation of her children; for by men and women, rich and poor, barrenness is still considered, in the East, a curse and a reproach; and it is regarded as disgraceful in a man to divorce, without some cogent reason, a wife who has borne him a child, especially while her child is living. If, there-



fore, a woman desire her husband's love, or the respect of others, her giving birth to a child is a source of great joy to herself and him, and her own interest alone is a sufficient motive for maternal tenderness. Very little expense is required, in Egypt, for the maintenance of a numerous offspring\*.

With the exception of those of the wealthier classes, the children in Egypt, though objects of so much solicitude, are generally very dirty, and shabbily clad. The stranger here is disgusted by the sight of them, and at once condemns the modern Egyptians as a very filthy people, without requiring any other reason for forming such an opinion of them; but it is often the case that those children who are most petted and beloved are the dirtiest, and worst clad. It is not uncommon to see, in the city in which I am writing, a lady shuffling along in her ample to'b and hhab'arah of new and rich and glistening silks, and one who scents the whole street with the odour of musk or civet as she passes along, with all that appears of her person scrupulously clean and delicate, her eyes neatly bordered with kohhl applied in the most careful manner, and the tip of a finger or two showing the fresh dye of the hhen'na, and by her side a little boy or girl, her own child, with a face besmeared with dirt, and with clothes appearing as though they had been worn for months without being washed. Few things surprised me so much as sights of this kind on my first arrival in this country. I naturally inquired the cause of what struck me as so strange and inconsistent, and was informed

\* It is mentioned by Diodorus Siculus (lib. i. cap 20), that the ancient Egyptians clothed and reared their children at a very trifling expense.









Para'e previous to Circumcision.



that the affectionate mothers thus neglected the appearance of their children, and purposely left them unwashed, and clothed them so shabbily, particularly when they had to take them out in public, *from fear of the evil eye*, which is excessively dreaded, and especially in the case of children, since they are generally esteemed the greatest of blessings, and therefore most likely to be coveted.

The children of the poor have a yet more neglected appearance: besides being very scantily clad, or quite naked, they are, in general, excessively dirty; their eyes are frequently extremely filthy; it is common to see half-a-dozen or more flies in each eye unheeded and unmolested. The parents consider it extremely injurious to wash, or even touch, the eyes, when they discharge that acrid humour which attracts the flies: they even affirm that the loss of sight would result from frequently touching or washing them when thus affected; though washing is really one of the best means of alleviating the complaint.

At the age of about five or six years, or sometimes later, the boy is circumcised\*. Previously to the performance of this rite in the metropolis and other towns of Egypt, the parents of the youth, if not in indigent circumstances, generally cause him to be paraded through several streets in the neighbourhood of their dwelling. They mostly avail themselves of the occurrence of a bridal procession to lessen the expenses of the parade: and, in this case, the boy and his attendants lead the procession. He generally wears a red

Among the peasants, not unfrequently at the age of twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years.



Kashmeer turban; but, in other respects, is dressed as a girl, with a yel'ek and sal'tah, and with a ckoors, suf'a, and other female ornaments\*. These articles of dress are of the richest description that can be procured: they are usually borrowed from some lady, and much too large to fit the boy. A horse, handsomely caparisoned, is also borrowed to convey him; and in his hand is placed a folded embroidered handkerchief, which he constantly holds before his mouth in his right hand. He is preceded by a servant of the barber, who is the operator, and by three or more musicians, whose instruments are commonly a hautboy and drums. The foremost person in the procession is generally the barber's servant, bearing his *hheml*, which is a case of wood, of a semi-cylindrical form, with four short legs; its front (the flat surface) covered with pieces of looking-glass and embossed brass; and its back, with a curtain. This is merely the barber's sign: the servant carries it in the manner represented in the engraving here inserted. The musicians follow next (or some of them precede the *hheml*), and then follows the boy; his horse led by a groom. Behind him walk several of his female relations and friends. Two boys are often paraded together, and sometimes borne by one horse. Of the bridal processions, with which that above described is so often united, an account will be found in its proper place. A description, also, of some further customs observed on the occasion of a circumcision, and particularly of a more genteel but less general mode of celebrating that

\* For a description of the ornaments here mentioned see the Appendix: the ckoors and suf'a are also represented in a preceding engraving, opposite page 50.



event, will be given in another chapter, relating to various private festivities\*.

The parents seldom devote much of their time or attention to the education of their children; generally contenting themselves with instilling into their young minds a few principles of religion, and then submitting them, if they can afford to do so, to the instruction of a schoolmaster. As early as possible, the child is taught to say, "I testify that there is no deity but God; and I testify that Mohham'mad is God's Apostle." He receives also lessons of religious pride, and learns to hate the Christians, and all other sects but his own, as thoroughly as does the Moos'lim in advanced age. Most of the children of the higher and middle classes, and some of those of the lower orders, are taught by the schoolmaster to read, and to recite the whole or certain portions of the Ckoor-a'n by memory. They afterwards learn the most common rules of arithmetic.

Schools are very numerous, not only in the metropolis, but in every large town; and there is one, at least, in every considerable village. Almost every mosque, *sebee'l* (or public fountain), and *hho'd* (or drinking-place for cattle) in the metropolis has a *koot-ta'b* (or school) attached to it, in which children are instructed for a very trifling expense; the *sheykh* or

\* A custom mentioned by Strabo (p. 824), as prevailing among the Egyptians in his time, is still universally practised in every part of Egypt, both by the Moos'lims and Copts, excepting in Alexandria and perhaps a few other places on the shore of the Mediterranean: it is also common, if not equally prevalent, in Arabia. Reland, who imperfectly describes this custom (*De Religione Mohammedica*, p. 75, edit. 1717), remarks its being mentioned likewise by Galen.



*fick'ee* (the master of the school) receiving from the parent of each pupil half a piaster (about five farthings of our money), or something more or less, every Thursday\*. The master of a school attached to a mosque or other public building in Cairo also generally receives yearly a *turboo'sh*, a piece of white muslin for a turban, a piece of linen, and a pair of shoes; and each boy receives, at the same time, a linen skull-cap, four or five cubits † of cotton cloth, and perhaps half a piece (ten or twelve cubits) of linen, and a pair of shoes, and, in some cases, half a piaster or a piaster. These presents are supplied by funds bequeathed to the school, and are given in the month of Rum'ada'n. The boys attend only during the hours of instruction, and then return to their homes. The lessons are generally written upon tablets of wood, painted white; and when



A School-boy learning the Alphabet.

\* Friday, being the sabbath of the Moos'lims, is a holiday to the school-boys and *fick'ee*.

† The cubit employed in measuring Egyptian cloths is equal to twenty two inches and two-thirds.



one lesson is learnt, the tablet is washed and another is written. They also practise writing upon the same tablet. The schoolmaster and his pupils sit upon the ground, and each boy has his tablet in his hands, or a copy of the Ckoor-a'n, or of one of its thirty sections, on a little kind of desk of palm-sticks. All who are learning to read recite their lessons aloud, at the same time, rocking their heads and bodies incessantly backwards and forwards; which practice is observed by almost all persons in reading the Ckoor-a'n; being thought to assist the memory. The noise may be imagined\*.

The boys first learn the letters of the alphabet; next, the vowel points and other orthographical marks; and then, the numerical value of each letter of the alphabet†. Previously to this third stage of the pupil's progress, it is customary for the master to ornament the tablet with black and red ink, and green paint, and to write upon it the letters of the alphabet in the order of their respective numerical values, and convey it to the father, who returns it with a piaster or two placed upon it. The like is also done at several subsequent stages of the boy's progress, as when he begins to learn the Ckoor-a'n, and six or seven times as he proceeds in learning the sacred book; each time the next lesson being written on the tablet. When he has become acquainted with the numerical values of the letters, the master writes for him some simple words, as the names of men; then the ninety-nine names or epithets of

\* The usual punishment is beating on the soles of the feet with a palm-stick.

† The Arabic letters are often used as numerals.



God : next the Fa't'hah, or opening chapter of the Ckoor-a'n, is written upon his tablet, and he reads it repeatedly until he has perfectly committed it to memory. He then proceeds to learn the other chapters of the Ckoor-a'n : after the first chapter he learns the last ; then the last but one ; next the last but two, and so on, in inverted order, ending with the second ; as the chapters in general successively decrease in length from the second to the last inclusively. It is seldom that the master of a school teaches writing ; and few boys learn to write unless destined for some employment which absolutely requires that they should do so ; in which latter case they are generally taught the art of writing, and likewise arithmetic, by a *ckabba'nec*, who is a person employed to weigh goods in a market or *ba'za'r*, with the steelyard. Those who are to devote themselves to religion, or to any of the learned professions, mostly pursue a regular course of study in the great mosque El-Az'har.

The schoolmasters in Egypt are mostly persons of very little learning : few of them are acquainted with any writings except the Ckoor-a'n, and certain prayers, which, as well as the contents of the sacred volume, they are hired to recite on particular occasions. I was lately told of a man who could neither read nor write succeeding to the office of a schoolmaster in my neighbourhood. Being able to recite the whole of the Ckoor-a'n, he could hear the boys repeat their lessons : to write them, he employed the '*aree'f*' (or head boy in the school), pretending that his eyes were weak. A few days after he had taken upon himself this office, a poor woman brought a letter for him to read to her from her



son, who had gone on pilgrimage. The fick'ee pretended to read it, but said nothing; and the woman, inferring from his silence that the letter contained bad news, said to him, "Shall I shriek?" He answered "Yes." "Shall I tear my clothes?" she asked; he replied "Yes." So the poor woman returned to her house, and with her assembled friends performed the lamentation and other ceremonies usual on the occasion of a death. Not many days after this her son arrived, and she asked him what he could mean by causing a letter to be written stating that he was dead. He explained the contents of the letter, and she went to the schoolmaster and begged him to inform her why he had told her to shriek and to tear her clothes, since the letter was to inform her that her son was well, and he was now arrived at home. Not at all abashed, he said, "God knows futurity! How could I know that your son would arrive in safety? It was better that you should think him dead than be led to expect to see him and perhaps be disappointed." Some persons who were sitting with him praised his wisdom, exclaiming, "Truly, our new fick'ee is a man of unusual judgment!" and, for a little while, he found that he had raised his reputation by this blunder.

Some parents employ a sheykh or fick'ee to teach their boys at home. The father usually teaches his son to perform the *woodoo'* and other ablutions, and to say his prayers, and instructs him in other religious and moral duties to the best of his ability. The Prophet directed his followers to order their children to say their prayers when seven years of age, and to beat them if they did not do so when ten years old; and at the latter



age to make them sleep in separate beds : in Egypt, however, very few persons pray before they have attained to manhood.

The female children are very seldom taught to read or write ; and not many of them, even among the higher orders, learn to say their prayers. Some of the rich engage a *shey'khah* (or learned woman) to visit the *hharee'm* daily, to teach their daughters and female slaves to say their prayers, and to recite a few chapters of the *Ckoor-a'n*, and sometimes to instruct them in reading and writing ; but these are very rare accomplishments for females even of the highest class in Egypt\*. There are many schools in which girls are taught plain needle-work, embroidery, &c. In families in easy circumstances a *m'al'lim'eh*†, or female teacher of such kinds of work, is often engaged to attend the girls at their own home.

However much the son is caressed and fondled, in general he feels and manifests a most profound and praiseworthy respect for his parents. Disobedience to parents is considered by the *Moos'lims* as one of the greatest of sins, and classed, in point of heinousness, with six other sins, which are idolatry, murder, falsely accusing modest women of adultery, wasting the property of orphans, taking usury, and desertion in an expedition against infidels. An undutiful child is very seldom heard of among the Egyptians or the Arabs in

\* The young daughters of persons of the middle classes are sometimes instructed with the boys in a public school ; but they are usually veiled, and hold no intercourse with the boys. I have often seen a well-dressed girl reading the *Ckoor-a'n* in a boys' school.

† Thus pronounced for *mo'al'lim'eh*.



general. Sons scarcely ever sit, or eat, or smoke, in the presence of the father, unless bidden to do so; and they often even wait upon him and upon his guests at meals and on other occasions: they do not cease to act thus when they have become men. I once breakfasted with an Egyptian merchant, before the door of his house, in the month of Rum'ada'n (and therefore a little after sunset); and though every person who passed by, however poor, was invited to partake of the meal, we were waited upon by two of my host's sons; the elder about forty years of age. As they had been fasting during the whole of the day, and had as yet only taken a draught of water, I begged the father to allow them to sit down and eat with us: he immediately told them that they might do so; but they declined. The mothers generally enjoy, in a greater degree than the fathers, the affection of their children; but do not receive from them the same outward marks of respect. I have often known servants to hoard their wages for their mothers, though seldom for their fathers.



## CHAPTER III.

## RELIGION AND LAWS.

As the most important branch of their education, and the main foundation of their manners and customs, the religion and laws of the people who are the subject of these pages must be well understood,—not only in their general principles, but in many minor points,—before we can proceed to consider their social condition and habits in the state of manhood.

A difference of opinion among Moos'lims, respecting some points of religion and law, has given rise to four sects, which consider each other orthodox as to fundamental matters. These sects are the *Hhan'afees*, *Sha'fe'ees*, *Ma'likees*\*, and *Iham'bel'ees*,—so called from the names of the respective doctors whose tenets they have adopted. The Turks are of the first sect, which is the most reasonable: the inhabitants of Cairo, a small proportion excepted (who are *Hhan'afees*), are either *Sha'fe'ees* or *Ma'likees*; and it is generally said they are mostly of the former of these sects, as are also the people of Arabia: those of the *Shurckee'yeh*, on the east of the Delta, *Sha'fe'ees*: those of the *Ghurbee'yeh*, or Delta, *Sha'fe'ees*, with a few *Ma'likees*: those of the *Bohhey'reh*, on the west of the Delta, *Ma'likees*: the in-

\* Commonly pronounced *Ma'l'kee*.



habitants of the Sa'ee'd, or the valley of Upper Egypt, are likewise, with few exceptions, Ma'likees: so also are the Nubians, and the Western Arabs. To the fourth sect, very few persons in the present day belong.

The Mohhammiadan religion is generally called by the Arabs, *el-Isla'm*. *Eema'n* and *Deen* are the particular terms applied, respectively, to faith and practical religion.

The grand principles of the faith are expressed in two articles; the first of which is this—

*“There is no deity but God.”*

God, who created all things in heaven and in earth, who preserveth all things, and decreeth all things, who is without beginning, and without end, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, is *one*. His unity is thus declared in a short chapter of the C'koor-a'n\*: “Say, He is one God; God the Eternal: He neither begets, nor is He begotten; and there is none equal unto Him.” He hath no partner, nor any offspring, in the creed of the Moos'lim. Though Jesus Christ (whose name should not be mentioned without adding—“on whom be peace”) is believed to have been born of a pure virgin, by the miraculous operation of God †, without any natural father,—to be the Messiah, and “the Word

\* Ch. 112.—In quoting passages in the C'koor-a'n, I have sometimes followed Sale's translation; to the fidelity of which I need scarcely add my testimony. When necessary, I have distinguished the verses by numbers. In doing this I had originally adopted the divisions made by Marracci, but have since made the numbers to agree with those in the late edition of the Arabic text by Fluegel, which, from its superior accuracy, is likely to supersede the former editions.

† C'koor-a'n, ch. iii., vv. 40—42.



of God, which He imparted unto Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him”<sup>\*</sup>—yet he is not called the Son of God; and no higher titles are given to him than those of a Prophet and Apostle: he is even considered as of inferior dignity to Mohham’mad, inasmuch as the Gospel is held to be superseded by the Ckoor-a’n. The Moos’lim believes that Seyyid’na ’Ee’sa† (or “our Lord Jesus”), after he had fulfilled the object of his mission, was taken up unto God from the Jews, who sought to slay him; and that another person, on whom God had stamped the likeness of Christ, was crucified in his stead‡. He also believes that Christ is to come again upon the earth, to establish the Mohhammadan religion, and perfect peace and security, after having killed Antichrist, and to be a sign of the approach of the last day.

The other grand article of the faith, which cannot be believed without the former, is this—

*“Mohham’mad is God’s Apostle.”*

Mohham’mad is believed, by his followers, to have been the last and greatest of Prophets and Apostles§. Six of these—namely, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohham’mad—are believed each to have received a revealed law, or system of religion and morality. That, however, which was revealed to Adam was abrogated by the next; and each succeeding law,

<sup>\*</sup> Ckoor-a’n, ch. iv., v. 169.

† The title of *Seyyid’na* (our Lord) is given by the Moos’lins to prophets and other venerated persons.

‡ Ckoor-a’n, ch. iv., v. 156.

§ The Moos’lim seldom mentions the name of the Prophet without adding, “*sa’la-l-la’hoo ’aley’hi we-sel’lem,*” i. e., “God favour and preserve him!”



or code of laws, abrogated the preceding: therefore, those who professed the Jewish religion from the time of Moses to that of Jesus were true believers; and those who professed the Christian religion (uncorrupted, as the Moos'lims say, by the tenet that Christ was the *son of God*) until the time of Mohham'mad are held, in like manner, to have been true believers. But the copies of the Pentateuch, the Psalms of David (which the Moos'lims also hold to be of divine origin), and the Gospels now existing, the Mohhammadans believe to have been so much altered as to contain very little of the true word of God. The C'koor-a'n, they believe to have suffered no alteration whatever.

It is further necessary, that the Moos'lim should believe in the existence of angels, and of the devil, and likewise *geni* (an intermediate race of beings between angels and men): also, in the immortality of the soul, the general resurrection and judgment, in future rewards and punishments in Paradise \* and Hell †, in the balance in which good and evil works shall be weighed, and in the bridge *Es-Sira't* (which extends over the midst of Hell, finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword), over which all must pass, and from which the wicked shall fall into Hell. He believes, also, that they who have acknowledged the faith of Mohham'mad and yet acted wickedly will not remain in Hell for ever; but that all of other religions must: that there are, however, degrees of punishments, as well as of rewards,—the former consisting in severe torture by excessive heat and cold, and the latter, in the indulgence of the appetites by

\* *El-Gen'neh*, or the garden.

† *Gehen'nem*.



most delicious meats and drinks, and, above all, by the company of the girls of Paradise, whose eyes will be very large and entirely black\*, and whose stature will be proportioned to that of the men, which will be the height of a tall palm-tree, or about sixty feet. Such, the Moos'lins generally believe, was the height of our first parents. It is said that the souls of martyrs reside, until the judgment, in the crops of green birds, which eat of the fruits of Paradise. Women are not to be excluded from Paradise, according to the Mohhamadan faith; though it has been asserted, by many Christians, that the Moos'lins believe women to have no souls. In several places in the Ckoor-a'n, Paradise is promised to all true believers, whether males or females. It is the doctrine of the Ckoor-a'n that no person will be admitted into Paradise by his own merits; but that admission will be granted to the believers merely by the mercy of God; yet that the felicity of each person will be proportioned to his merits. The very meanest in Paradise is promised "eighty thousand servants" (beautiful youths, called *wetee'ds*, or *wilda'n*), "seventy-two wives of the girls of Paradise" (*hhoo'ree'yehs*, or *hhoo'r el-'oyoo'n*), "besides the wives he had in this world," if he desire to have the latter (and the good will doubtless desire the good), "and a tent erected for him of pearls, jacinths, and emeralds, of a very large extent;" "and will be waited on by three hundred attendants while he eats, and served in dishes of gold, whereof three hundred shall be set before him at once, each containing a different kind of food, the last morsel of which will be as

\* Like those of the gazelle: this, however, is disputed.



grateful as the first:" wine also, "though forbidden in this life, will yet be freely allowed to be drunk in the next, and without danger, since the wine of Paradise will not inebriate\*." We are further told, that all superfluities from the bodies of the inhabitants of Paradise will be carried off by perspiration, which will diffuse an odour like that of musk; and that they will be clothed in the richest silks, chiefly of green. They are also promised perpetual youth, and children as many as they may desire. These pleasures, together with the songs of the angel Isra'feel, and many other gratifications of the senses, will charm even the meanest inhabitant of Paradise. But all these enjoyments will be lightly esteemed by those more blessed persons who are to be admitted to the highest of all honours—that spiritual pleasure of beholding, morning and evening, the face of God†. The Moos'lim must also believe in the examination of the dead in the sepulchre, by two angels, called Moon'kir and Nekee'r‡, of terrible aspect, who will cause the body (to which the soul shall, for the time, be re-united) to sit upright in the grave§, and will question the deceased respecting his faith. The wicked they will severely torture; but the good they will not hurt. Lastly, he should believe

\* See Sale's Preliminary Discourse to his Translation of the Ckoor-a'n, sect. iv.

† A Moos'lim of some learning professed to me that he considered the descriptions of Paradise given in the Ckoor-a'n to be, in a great measure, figurative; "like those," said he, "in the book of the Revelation of St. John," and he assured me that many learned Moos'lins were of the same opinion.

‡ Vulgarly called Na'kir and Nekee'r.

§ The corpse is always deposited in a vault, and not placed in a coffin, but merely wrapped in winding-sheets or clothes.



in God's absolute decree of every event, both good and evil. This doctrine has given rise to as much controversy among the Moos'lims as among Christians; but the former, generally, believe in predestination as, in some respects, conditional.

In religious practice, the most important duties are *prayer, alms-giving, fasting, and pilgrimage.*

The religious *purifications*, which are of two kinds, first, the ordinary ablution preparatory to *prayer*, and secondly, the washing of the whole body, together with the performance of the former ablution, are of primary importance: for prayer, which is a duty so important that it is called "the Key of Paradise," will not be accepted from a person in a state of uncleanness. It is therefore also necessary to avoid impurity by clipping the nails, shaving the head, and other similar practices\*.

There are partial washings, or purifications, which all Moos'lims perform on certain occasions, even if they neglect their prayers, and which are considered as religious acts†. The ablution called *el-woodoo'*, which is preparatory to prayer, I shall now describe. The purifications just before alluded to are a part of the woodoo': the other washings are not, of necessity, to be performed immediately after, but only when the person is about to say his prayers; and these are performed in the mosque or in the house, in public or in private. There is in every mosque a tank (called *mey'da-ah*), or a *hhanafee'yeh*, which is a raised re-

\* Alluded to in the first chapter.

† For an account of these private ablutions, and the occasions which require their performance, the reader may consult Reland, *De Rel. Moh.* pp. 80—83, ed. 1717.



servoir, with spouts round it, from which the water falls. In some mosques there are both these. The Moos'lims of the Hhan'afee sect (of which are the Turks) perform the ablution at the latter (which has received its name from that cause); for they must do it with running water, or from a tank or pool at least ten cubits in breadth, and the same in depth; and I believe that there is only one mey'da-ah in Cairo of that depth, which is in the great mosque El-Az'har. A small hhanafee'yeh of tinned copper, placed on a low shelf, and a large basin, or a small ewer and basin of the same metal, are generally used in the house for the performance of the woodoo'.



Vessels for Ablution.—The upper vessel (or hhanafee'yeh) is generally about a foot and a half in height.



The person, having tucked up his sleeves a little higher than his elbows, says, in a low voice, or inaudibly, "I purpose performing the woodoo', for prayer\*." He then washes his hands three times; saying, in the same manner as before, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful! Praise be to God, who hath given water for purification, and made el-Isla'm to be a light and a direction, and a guide to thy gardens, the gardens of delight, and to thy mansion, the mansion of peace." Then he rinses his mouth three times, throwing the water into it with his right hand †; and in doing this he says, "O God, assist me in the reading of thy book, and in commemorating Thee, and in thanking Thee, and in the beauty of thy worship." Next, with his right hand, he throws water up his nostrils (snuffing it up at the same time), and then blows it out, compressing his nostrils with the thumb and finger of the *left* hand; and this also is done three times. While doing it, he says, "O God, make me to smell the odours of Paradise, and bless me with its delights; and make me not to smell the smell of the fires [of Hell]." He then washes his face three times, throwing up the water with both hands, and saying, "O God, whiten my face with thy light, on the day when Thou shalt whiten the faces of thy favourites; and do not blacken my face, on the day when Thou shalt blacken the faces of thine enemies." His right hand and arm, as high as the elbow,

\* All persons do not use exactly the same words on this occasion, nor during the performance of the woodoo'; and most persons use no words during the performance.

† He should also use a tooth-stick (miswa'k) to clean his teeth; but few do so.



he next washes three times, and as many times causes some water to run along his arm, from the palm of the hand to the elbow, saying, as he does this, "O God, give me my book in my right hand\*; and reckon with me with a slight reckoning." In the same manner he washes the left hand and arm, saying, "O God, do not give me my book in my left hand, nor behind my back; and do not reckon with me with a difficult reckoning; nor make me to be one of the people of the fire." He next draws his wetted right hand over the upper part of his head, raising his turban or cap with his left: this he does but once; and accompanies the action with this supplication, "O God, cover me with thy mercy, and pour down thy blessing upon me; and shade me under the shadow of thy canopy, on the day when there shall be no shade but its shade." If he have a beard, he then combs it with the wetted fingers of his right hand; holding his hand with the palm forwards, and passing the fingers through his beard from the throat upwards. He then puts the tips of his fore-fingers into his ears, and twists them round, passing his thumbs at the same time round the back of the ears, from the bottom upwards; and saying, "O God, make me to be of those who hear what is said, and obey what is best;" or, "O God, make me to hear good." Next he wipes his neck with the back of the fingers of both hands, making the ends of his fingers meet behind his neck, and then drawing them forward; and in doing so, he says, "O God, free my neck from the fire; and keep me from the chains, and

\* To every man is appropriated a book, in which all the actions of his life are written. The just man, it is said, will receive his book in his right hand; but the wicked, in his left, which will be tied behind his back; his right hand being tied up to his neck.



the collars, and the fetters." Lastly, he' washes his feet, as high as the ankles, and passes his fingers between the toes : he washes the right foot first, saying, at the same time, " O God, make firm my foot upon the Sira't, on the day when feet shall slip upon it : " on washing the left foot, he says, " O God, make my walking to be approved, and my sin forgiven, and my works accepted, merchandise that shall not perish, by thy pardon, O Mighty ! O Forgiver ! by thy mercy, O most Merciful of those who show mercy ! " After having thus completed the ablution, he says, looking towards heaven, " Thine absolute glory, O God ! [I assert] with thy praise : I testify that there is no deity but Thee alone : Thou hast no companion : I implore thy forgiveness, and turn to Thee with repentance." Then, looking towards the earth, he adds, " I testify that there is no deity but God : and I testify that Mohham'mad is his servant and his apostle." Having uttered these words, he should recite, once, twice, or three times, the *Soo'at el-Ckudr*, or 97th chapter of the Ckoor-a'n.

The woodoo' is generally performed in less than two minutes ; most persons hurrying through the act, as well as omitting almost all the prayers, &c., which should accompany and follow the actions. It is not required before each of the five daily prayers, when the person is *conscious* of having avoided every kind of impurity since the last performance of this ablution. When water cannot be easily procured, or would be injurious to the health of the individual, he may perform the ablution with dust or sand. This ceremony is called *teyem'moom*. The person, in this case, strikes the palms of his hands upon any dry dust or sand (it will suffice to do so upon his cloth robe, as it



must contain some dust), and, with both hands, wipes his face: then, having struck his hands again upon the dust, he wipes his right hand and arm as high as the elbow; and then, the left hand and arm, in the same manner. This completes the ceremony. The washing of the whole body is often performed merely for the sake of cleanliness; but not as a religious act, excepting on particular occasions—as on the morning of Friday, and on the two grand festivals, &c.\*, when it is called *ghoos'l*.

Cleanliness is required not only in the worshipper, but also in the ground, mat, carpet, robe, or whatever else it be, upon which he prays. Persons of the lower orders often pray upon the bare ground, which is considered clean if it be dry; and they seldom wipe off immediately the dust which adheres to the nose and forehead in prostration, for it is regarded as ornamental to the believer's face; but when a person has a cloak or any other garment that he can take off without exposing his person in an unbecoming manner, he spreads it upon the ground to serve as a prayer-carpet. The rich use a prayer-carpet (called *segga'deh*) about the size of our hearth-rugs, having a niche represented upon it, the point of which is turned towards Mek'keh†. It is reckoned sinful to pass near before a person engaged in prayer.

*Prayer* is called *sal'ah*. Five times in the course of

\* Here, again, I must beg to refer the reader (if he desire such information) to Reland's account of the *ghoos'l*, and the occasions which require its performance.—De Rel. Moh. pp. 66—77, ed. 1717.

† *Segga'dehs*, of the kind here described, are now sold in London, under the name of Persian carpets or Persian rugs.



every day is its performance required of the Moos'lim ; but there are comparatively few persons in Egypt who do not sometimes, or often, neglect this duty ; and many who scarcely ever pray. Certain portions of the ordinary prayers are called *furd*, which are appointed by the Ckoor-a'n ; and others, *soon'neh*, which are appointed by the Prophet, without allegation of a divine order.

The first time of prayer is the *mugh'rib*, or sunset \*, or rather, about four minutes later ; the second, the 'esh'ë, or when the evening has closed, and it is quite dark † ; the third, is the *soobhh*, or *fegr* ; i. e., day-break ‡ ; the fourth, the *doohr*, or noon, or, rather, a little later, when the sun has begun to decline ; the fifth, the 'asr, or afternoon ; i. e., about mid-time between noon and nightfall §. The Prophet would not have his followers pray at sunrise, nor exactly at noon or sunset, because, he said, infidels worshipped the sun at such times.

Should the time of prayer arrive when they are

\* The Mohhammadian day commencing from sunset.

† The 'esh'ë of the Sha'fe'ees, Ma'likees, and Hham'bel'ees is when the red gleam (*esh-shuf'uck el-ahh'mar*) after sunset has disappeared ; and that of the Hhan'afees, when both the red and the white gleam have disappeared.

‡ Generally on the first faint appearance of light in the East. The Hhan'afees mostly perform the morning-prayer a little later, when the yellow gleam (*el-isyfira'r*) appears: this they deem the most proper time, but they may pray earlier.

§ The 'asr, according to the Sha'fe'ees, Ma'likees, and Hham'bel'ees, is when the shade of an object, cast by the sun, is equal to the length of that object, added to the length of the shade which the same object casts at noon ; and, according to the Hhan'afees, when the shadow is equal to *twice* the length of the object added to the length of its mid-day shadow.



eating, or about to eat, they are not to rise to prayer till they have finished their meal. The prayers should be said as nearly as possible at the times above mentioned: they may be said after, but not before. The several times of prayer are announced by the *moo-ed'din* of each mosque. Having ascended to the gallery of the *ma'd'neh*, or *men'a'ret'*, he chants the *ada'n*, or call to prayer, which is as follows: "God is most Great!" (this is said four times.) "I testify that there is no deity but God!" (twice.) "I testify that Mohham'mad is God's Apostle!" (twice.) "Come to prayer!" (twice.) "Come to security!" (twice.)\* "God is most Great!" (twice.) "There is no deity but God!" — Most of the *moo-ed'dins* of Cairo have harmonious and sonorous voices, which they strain to the utmost pitch; yet there is a simple and solemn melody in their chants which is very striking, particularly in the stillness of night†.

Two other calls to prayer are made during the night, to rouse those persons who desire to perform supererogatory acts of devotion‡. A little after midnight, the *moo-ed'dins* of the great royal mosques in Cairo (*i. e.*, of each of the great mosques founded by a Soolta'n, which is called *Ga'më' Soolta'nee*), and of some other large mosques, ascend the *ma'd'nehs*, and chant the following call; which, being one of the two night-calls not at the regular periods of obligatory prayers, is called the *Oo'la*, a term signifying merely "the First."

\* Here is added, in the morning call, "Prayer is better than sleep!" (twice.)

† A common air, to which the *ada'n* is chanted in Cairo, will be given in the chapter on Egyptian Music.

‡ They are few who do so.



Having commenced by chanting the common *ada'n*, with those words which are introduced in the call to morning-prayer ("Prayer is better than sleep"), he adds, "There is no deity but God" (three times) "alone: He hath no companion: to Him belongeth the dominion; and to Him belongeth praise. He giveth life, and causeth death; and He is living, and shall never die. In His hand is blessing [or good]; and He is Almighty.—There is no deity but God!" (three times) "and we will not worship any beside Him, 'serving Him with sincerity of religion\*', 'though the infidels be averse†' [thereto]. There is no deity but God! Mohham'mad is the most noble of the creation in the sight of God. Mohham'mad is the best prophet and apostle and lord by whom his companions have been governed; comely; liberal of gifts; perfect; pleasant to the taste; sweet; soft to the throat [or to be drunk]. Pardon, O Lord, thy servant and thy poor dependant, the endower of this place, and him who watches it with goodness and beneficence, and its neighbours, and those who frequent it at the times of prayers and good acts, O thou Bountiful!—O Lord! ‡" (three times.) "Thou art He who ceaseth not to be distinguished by mercy: Thou art liberal of thy clemency towards the rebellious; and protectest him; and coverest the base; and art the author of everything that is good; and thou bestowest thy beneficence upon the servant, and relievest him, O thou Bountiful!—O Lord!" (three times.) "My sins, when I think upon them, [I see to be] many; but the mercy of my Lord

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\* Ckooor-a'n, ch. xcvi. v. 4.

† Same, ch. ix. v. 32, and ch. lxi. v. 8.

‡ This exclamation (*Yu' rubb!*) is made in a very loud tone.



is more abundant : I am not solicitous on account of good that I have done ; but for the mercy of God I am most solicitous. Extolled be the Everlasting ! He hath no companion in his great dominion. His absolute glory [I assert] : exalted be his name : [I assert] the absolute glory of God.”

About an hour before daybreak, the moo-ed'dins of most mosques chant the second call, named the *Eb'ed* (which signifies “ the Eternal ”), and so called from that word occurring near the commencement. This call is as follows : “ [I assert] the absolute glory of God, the Eternal One, the Eternal ” (three times) : “ the absolute glory of God, the Desired, the Existing, the Single, the Supreme : the absolute glory of God, the One, the Sole : the absolute glory of Him who taketh to himself, in his great dominion, neither female companion, nor male partner, nor any like unto Him, nor any that is disobedient, nor any deputy, nor any equal, nor any offspring. His absolute glory [I assert] : exalted be his name ! He is a Deity who knew what hath been before it was, and called into existence what hath been ; and He is now existing as He was [at the first]. His absolute glory [I assert] : exalted be his name ! He is a Deity unto whom there is none like existing. There is none like unto God, the Bountiful, existing. There is none like unto God, the Clement, existing. There is none like unto God, the Great, existing. There is no deity but Thee, O our Lord, to be worshipped and to be praised and to be desired and to be glorified. [I assert] the absolute glory of Him who created all creatures, and numbered them, and distributed their sustenance, and decreed the affairs of his servants : and our Lord, the Bountiful, the Cle-



ment, the Great, forgetteth not one of them. [I assert] the absolute glory of Him who, of his power and greatness, caused the pure water to flow from the solid stone, the mass of rock : the absolute glory of Him who spake with our lord Moo'sa [or Moses] upon the mountain\* ; whereupon the mountain was reduced to dust†, through dread of God, whose name be exalted, the One, the Sole. There is no deity but God. He is a just Judge. [I assert] the absolute glory of the First. Blessing and peace be on thee, O comely of countenance ! O Apostle of God ! Blessing and peace be on thee, O first of the creatures of God ! and seal of the apostles of God ! Blessing and peace be on thee, O thou Prophet ! on thee and on thy Family, and all thy Companions. God is most Great ! God is most Great !" &c., to the end of the call to morning-prayer. "O God, favour and preserve and bless the blessed Prophet, our lord Mohham'mad ! May God, whose name be blessed and exalted, be well pleased with thee, O our lord El-Hhas'an, and with thee, O our lord El-Hhosey'n, and with thee, O Ab'oo Farra'g‡, O Sheykh of the Arabs, and with all the favourites [the *wel'ees*] of God. Amen."

The prayers which are performed daily at the five periods before mentioned are said to be of so many *rek'ahs*, or inclinations of the head§.

\* These words, "The absolute glory of Him who spake," &c. (*soobhha'na men kel'lema*, &c.), are pronounced in a very high and loud tone.

† See Ckoor-a'n, ch. vii. v. 139.

‡ "Ab'oo Farra'g" is a surname of a famous saint, the sey'yid Ahh'mad El-Bed'awee, buried at Tunta, in the Delta : it implies that he obtains relief to those who visit his tomb, and implore his intercession.

§ The morning-prayers, two *rek'ahs* soon'neh and two *furd* :



The worshipper, standing with his face towards the *Ckib'leh* (that is, towards *Mek'keh*), and his feet not quite close together, says, inaudibly, that he has purposed to recite the prayers of so many *rek'ahs* (soon'neh or furd) the morning-prayers (or the noon, &c.) of the present day (or night); and then, raising his open hands on each side of his face, and touching the lobes of his ears with the ends of his thumbs, he says, "God is most Great!" (*Alla'hoo Ak'bar.*) This ejaculation is called the *tekbee'r*. He then proceeds to recite the prayers of the prescribed number of *rek'ahs*\*.

Still standing, and placing his hands before him, a little below his girdle, the left within the right, he recites (with eyes directed towards the spot where his head will touch the ground in prostration) the *Fa't'hah*, or opening chapter of the *Ckoor-a'n†*, and after it three

the noon, four soon'neh and four furd; the afternoon, the same; the evening, three furd and two soon'neh; and the night-prayers (or 'esh'e), four soon'neh and four furd, and two soon'neh again. After these are yet to be performed three *rek'ahs witr*; i. e. single or separate prayers: these may be performed immediately after the 'esh'e prayers, or at any time in the night; but are more meritorious if late in the night.

\* There are some little differences in the attitudes of the four great sects during prayer. I describe those of the *Hhan'afees*.

† Some persons previously utter certain supererogatory ejaculations, expressive of the praise and glory of God; and add, "I seek refuge with God from Satan the accursed;" which petition is often offered up before reciting any part of the *Ckoor-a'n* on other occasions, as commanded by the *Ckoor-a'n* itself (ch. xvi. v. 100). The *Ckoor-a'n* is usually recited, in the furd prayers, in a voice slightly audible, excepting at noon and the 'asr, when it is recited inaudibly. By *Ima'ms*, when praying at the head of others, and sometimes by persons praying alone, it is chanted. In the soon'neh prayers it is recited inaudibly.







Thee !” Then, raising his head and body, he repeats, “God is most Great !” He next drops gently upon his knees, and, saying again, “God is most Great !” places his hands upon the ground, a little before his knees, and puts his nose and forehead also to the ground (the



Postures of Prayer. (Part II.)

former first), between his two hands. During this prostration he says, “[I assert] the absolute glory of my Lord, the Most High !” (three times). He raises his head and body (but his knees remain upon the ground), sinks backwards upon his heels, and places his hands



upon his thighs, saying, at the same time, "God is most Great!" and this he repeats as he bends his head a second time to the ground. During this second prostration he repeats the same words as in the first, and in raising his head again, he utters the tekbee'r as before. Thus are completed the prayers of one rek'ah. In all the changes of posture, the toes of the right foot must not be moved from the spot where they were first placed, and the left foot should be moved as little as possible.

Having finished the prayers of one rek'ah, the worshipper rises upon his feet (but without moving his toes from the spot where they were, particularly those of the right foot), and repeats the same; only he should recite some other chapter, or portion, after the Fa't'hah, than that which he repeated before, as, for instance, the 108th chapter\*.

After every *second* rek'ah (and after the *last*, though there be an odd number, as in the evening furd), he does not immediately raise his knees from the ground, but bends his left foot under him, and sits upon it, and places his hands upon his thighs, with the fingers a little apart. In this posture, he says, "Praises are to God, and prayers, and good works. Peace be on thee, O Prophet, and the mercy of God, and his blessings! Peace be on us, and on [all] the right worshippers of

\* In the third and fourth furd rek'ahs, the recitation of a second portion of the Ckoor-a'n after the Fa't'hah should be omitted; and before furd prayers of four rek'ahs, the *icka'meh* (which consists of the words of the ada'n, with the addition of "the time of prayer is come," pronounced twice after "come to security") should be repeated; but most persons neglect doing this, and many do not observe the former rule.



God !” Then raising the first finger of the right hand\* (but not the hand itself), he adds, “ I testify that there is no deity but God ; and I testify that Mohham’ad is his servant and his apostle.”

After the *last rek’ah* of each of the prayers (that is, after the *soon’neh* prayers and the *furd* alike), after saying, “ Praises are to God,” &c., the worshipper, looking upon his right shoulder, says, “ Peace be on you, and the mercy of God !” then, looking upon the left, he repeats the same. These salutations are considered by some as addressed only to the guardian angels who watch over the believer, and note all his actions† ; but others say that they are addressed both to angels and men (*i. e.* believers only), who may be present ; no person, however, returns them. Before the salutations in the *last* prayer, the worshipper may offer up any short petition (in Scriptural language rather than his own) ; while he does so looking at the palms of his two hands, which he holds like an open book before him, and then draws over his face, from the forehead downwards.

Having finished both the *soon’neh* and *furd* prayers, the worshipper, if he would acquit himself completely, or rather, perform supererogatory acts, remains sitting (but may then sit more at his ease), and recites the *A’yet el-Koor’see*, or Throne-Verse, which is the 256th

\* The doctors of El-Isla’m differ respecting the proper position of the fingers of the right hand on this occasion : some hold that all the fingers but the first are to be doubled, as represented in Part II. of the sketch of the postures of prayer.

† Some say that every believer is attended by two angels ; others say, five ; others, sixty, or a hundred and sixty.



of the 2d chapter of the Ckoor-a'n\* ; and adds, "O High ! O Great ! Thine absolute glory [I assert.]" He then repeats, "The absolute glory of God !" (thirty-three times.) "The absolute glory of God, the Great, with his praise for ever !" (once.) "Praise be to God !" (thirty-three times.) "Extolled be his dignity ! There is no deity but Him," (once.) "God is most Great !" (thirty-three times.) "God is most Great in greatness, and praise be to God in abundance !" (once.) He counts these repetitions with a string of beads called *seb'hhah* (more properly *soob'hhah*). The beads are ninety-nine, and have a mark between each thirty-three. They are of aloes, or other odoriferous or precious wood, or of coral, or of certain fruit-stones, or seeds, &c.

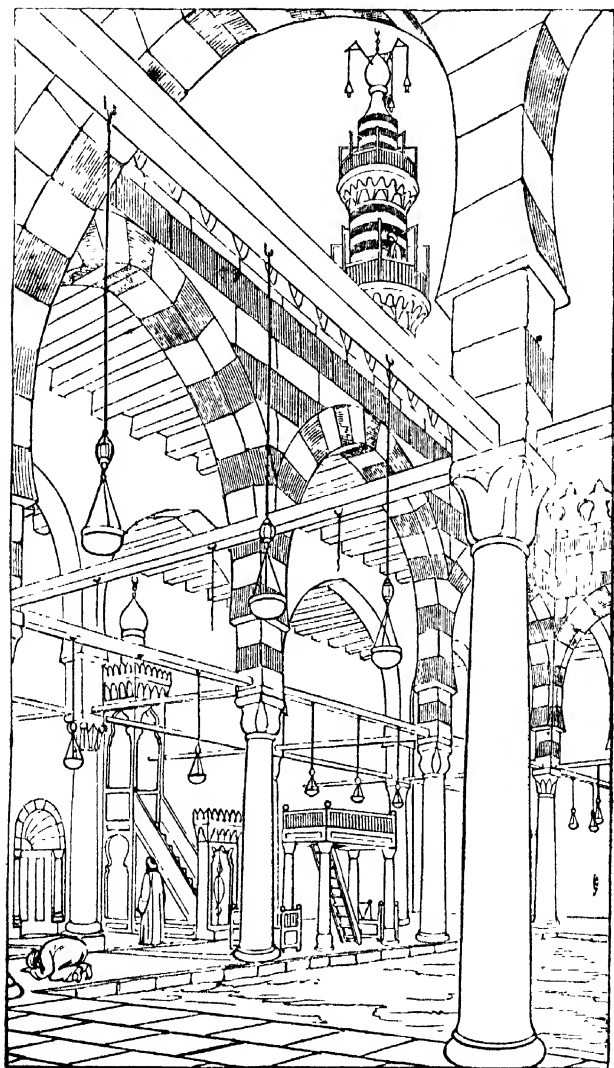
Any wandering of the eyes, or of the mind, a coughing, or the like, answering a question, or any action not prescribed to be performed, must be strictly avoided (unless it be *between* the soon'neh prayers and the furd or be difficult to avoid, for it is held allowable to make three slight irregular motions or deviations from correct deportment) ; otherwise the worshipper must begin again, and repeat his prayers with due reverence. It is considered extremely sinful to interrupt a man when engaged in his devotions. The time usually occupied in repeating the prayers of four rek'ahs, without the supererogatory additions, is less than four, or even three minutes. The Moos'lim says the five daily prayers in his house or shop or in the mosque, according as may be most convenient to him : it is seldom that a person goes from his house to the mosque to

\* Beginning with the words "God ! there is no deity but Him ;" and ending with, "He is the High, the Great."









Interior of a Mosque.



pray, excepting to join the congregation on Friday. Men of the lower orders oftener pray in the mosques than those who have a comfortable home, and a mat or carpet upon which to pray.

The same prayers are said by the congregation in the mosque on the noon of Friday, but there are additional rites performed by the Ima'm and other ministers on this occasion. The chief reasons for fixing upon Friday, as the Mohhammadan Sabbath, were, it is said, because Adam was created on that day, and died on the same day of the week, and because the general resurrection was prophesied to happen on that day; whence, particularly, Friday was named the day of *El-Goom'ah* (or the assembly). The Moos'lim does not abstain from worldly business on Friday excepting during the time of prayer, according to the precept of the Ckoor-a'n, ch. lxii., vv. 9 and 10.

To form a proper conception of the ceremonies of the Friday-prayers, it is necessary to have some idea of the interior of a mosque. A mosque in which a congregation assembles to perform the Friday-prayers is called *ga'më*'. The mosques of Cairo are so numerous, that none of them is inconveniently crowded on the Friday; and some of them are so large as to occupy spaces three or four hundred feet square. They are mostly built of stone, the alternate courses of which are generally coloured externally red and white. Most commonly a large mosque consists of porticoes surrounding a square open court, in the centre of which is a tank or a fountain for ablution. One side of the building faces the direction of Mek'keh, and the portico on this side, being the principal place of prayer, is more spacious than those on the three other sides of the



court: it generally has two or more rows of columns, forming so many aisles, parallel with the exterior wall. In some cases, this portico, like the other three, is open to the court; in other cases, it is separated from the court by partitions of wood, connecting the front row of columns. In the centre of its exterior wall is the *mehhra'b* (or niche) which marks the direction of Mek'-keh; and to the right of this is the *mim'bar* (or pulpit). Opposite the *mehhra'b*, in the fore part of the portico, or in its central part, there is generally a platform (called *dik'keh*), surrounded by a parapet, and supported by small columns; and by it, or before it, are one or two seats, having a kind of desk to bear a volume of the Ckoor-a'n, from which a chapter is read to the congregation. The walls are generally quite plain, being simply white-washed; but in some mosques the lower part of the wall of the place of prayer is lined with coloured marbles, and the other part ornamented with various devices executed in stucco, but mostly with texts of the Ckoor-a'n (which form long friezes, having a pleasing effect), and never with the representation of anything that has life. The pavement is covered with matting, and the rich and poor pray side by side; the man of rank or wealth enjoying no peculiar distinction or comfort, unless (which is sometimes the case) he have a prayer-carpet brought by his servant, and spread for him\*.

The Prophet did not forbid *women* to attend public prayers in a mosque, but pronounced it better for them to pray in private; but in Cairo neither females nor young boys are allowed to pray with the congregation

\* Adjoining each mosque are several latrinæ, in each of which is a receptacle with water, for ablution.



in the mosque, nor even to be present in the mosque at any time of prayer : formerly women were permitted (and perhaps are still in some countries), but were obliged to place themselves apart from the men, and behind the latter ; because, as Sale has remarked, the Moos'lims are of opinion that the presence of females inspires a different kind of devotion from that which is requisite in a place dedicated to the worship of God. Very few women in Egypt even pray at home.

Over each of the mosques of Cairo presides a *Na'zir* (or warden), who is the trustee of the funds which arise from lands, houses, &c. bequeathed to the mosque by the founder and others, and who appoints the religious ministers and the inferior servants. Two *Ima'ms* are employed to officiate in each of the larger mosques : one of them, called the *Khat'eb*, preaches and prays before the congregation on the Friday : the other is an *Ima'm Ra'tib*, or ordinary *Ima'm*, who recites the five prayers of every day in the mosque, at the head of those persons who may be there at the exact times of those prayers : but in most of the smaller mosques both these offices are performed by one *Ima'm*. There are also to each mosque one or more *moo-ed'dins* (to chant the call to prayer), and *bowwa'bs* (or door-keepers), according as there are one or more *ma'd'nehs* (or menarets) and entrances ; and several other servants are employed to sweep the mosque, spread the mats, light the lamps, and attend to the *sa'ckiyeh* (or water-wheel), by which the tank or fountain, and other receptacles for water, necessary to the performance of ablutions, are supplied. The *Ima'ms*, and those persons who perform the lower offices, are all paid from the funds of the mosque, and not by any contributions exacted from the people.



The condition of the Ima'ms is very different, in most respects, from that of Christian priests. They have no authority above other persons, and do not enjoy any respect but what their reputed piety or learning may obtain them : nor are they a distinct order of men set apart for religious offices, like our clergy, and composing an indissoluble fraternity ; for a man who has acted as the Ima'm of a mosque may be displaced by the warden of that mosque, and, with his employment and salary, loses the *title* of Ima'm, and has no better chance of being again chosen for a religious minister than any other person competent to perform the office. The Ima'ns obtain their livelihood chiefly by other means than the service of the mosque, as their salaries are very small : that of a Khatee'b being generally about a piaster ( $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  of our money) per month ; and that of an ordinary Ima'm, about five piasters. Some of them engage in trade ; several of them are *'atta'rs* (or druggists and perfumers), and many of them are school-masters : those who have no regular occupations of these kinds often recite the C'koor-a'n for hire in private houses. They are mostly chosen from among the poor students of the great mosque El-Az'har.

The large mosques are open from day-break till a little after the 'esh'ë, or till nearly two hours after sunset. The others are closed between the hours of morning and noon prayers ; and most mosques are also closed in rainy weather (excepting at the times of prayer), lest persons who have no shoes should enter and dirt the pavement and matting. Such persons always enter by the door nearest the tank or fountain, (if there be more than one door,) that they may wash before they pass into the place of prayer ; and generally this door alone



is left open in dirty weather. The great mosque El-Az'har remains open all night, with the exception of the principal place of prayer, which is called the *muck-soo'rah*, being partitioned off from the rest of the building. In many of the larger mosques, particularly in the afternoon, persons are seen lounging, chatting together, eating, sleeping, and sometimes spinning or sewing, or engaged in some other simple craft; but, notwithstanding such practices, the Moos'lims very highly respect their mosques. There are several mosques in Cairo (as the Az'har, Hhasaney'n, &c.), before which no Frank, nor any other Christian, nor a Jew, were allowed to pass, till of late years since the French invasion.

On the Friday, half an hour before the *dookh* (or noon), the moo-ed'dins of the mosques ascend to the galleries of the ma'd'nehs, and chant the *Sela'm*, which is a salutation to the Prophet, not always expressed in the same words, but generally in words to the following effect:—"Blessing and peace be on thee, O thou of great dignity! O Apostle of God! Blessing and peace be on thee, to whom the Truth said, I am God! Blessing and peace be on thee, thou first of the creatures of God, and seal of the Apostles of God! From me be peace on thee, and on thy Family and all thy Companions!" Persons then begin to assemble in the mosques.

The utmost solemnity and decorum are observed in the public worship of the Moos'lims. Their looks and behaviour in the mosque are not those of enthusiastic devotion, but of calm and modest piety. Never are they guilty of a designedly irregular word or action during their prayers. The pride and fanaticism which they



exhibit in common life, in intercourse with persons of their own, or of a different faith, seem to be dropped on their entering the mosque, and they appear wholly absorbed in the adoration of their Creator; humble and downcast, yet without affected humility, or a forced expression of countenance. The Moos'lim takes off his shoes at the door of the mosque, carries them in his left hand, sole to sole, and puts his right foot first over the threshold. If he have not previously performed the preparatory ablution, he repairs at once to the tank or fountain to acquit himself of that duty. Before he commences his prayers he places his shoes (and his sword and pistols, if he have such arms,) upon the matting, a little before the spot where his head will touch the ground in prostration: his shoes are put one upon the other, sole to sole.

The people who assemble to perform the noon-prayers of Friday arrange themselves in rows parallel to that side of the mosque in which is the niche, and facing that side. Many do not go until the ada'n of noon, or just before. When a person goes at, or a little after, the Sela'm, as soon as he has taken his place in one of the ranks, he performs two rek'ahs, and then remains sitting, on his knees or cross-legged, while a reader, having seated himself on the reading-chair immediately after the Sela'm, is occupied in reciting (usually without book) the Soo'rat el-Kahf (the 18th chapter of the Ckoor-a'n), or a part of it; for, generally, he has not finished it before the ada'n of noon, when he stops. All the congregation, as soon as they hear the ada'n (which is the same as on other days), sit on their knees and feet. When the ada'n is finished, they stand up,



and perform, each separately, two *rek'ahs*, *soon'net el-goom'ah* (or the *soon'neh* ordinance for Friday), which they conclude, like the ordinary prayers, with the two salutations. A servant of the mosque, called a *mooruck'ckee*, then opens the folding-doors at the foot of the pulpit-stairs, takes from behind them a straight, wooden sword, and, standing a little to the right of the door-way, with his right side towards the *ckib'leh*, holds this sword in his right hand, resting the point on the ground: in this position he says, "Verily God favoureth, and his angels bless, the Prophet. O ye who believe, bless him, and greet him with a salutation!" Then, one or more persons, called *Moobal'lighs*, stationed on the *dik'keh*, chant the following, or similar words †. "O God! favour and preserve and bless the most noble of the Arabs and 'Ag'am [or foreigners], the *Ima'm* of *Mek'keh* and *El-Medee'neh* and the Temple, to whom the spider showed favour, and wove its web in the cave; and whom the dubb ‡ saluted, and before whom the moon was cloven in twain, our lord *Mohham'mad*, and his Family and Companions!" The *Mooruck'ckee* then recites the *ada'n* (which the *Moo-ed'dins* have already chanted): after every few words he pauses, and the *Moobal'lighs*, on the *dik'keh*, repeat the same words in a sonorous chant §. Before the *ada'n* is finished, the

\* If of the sect of the *Sha'fe'ees*, to which most of the people of Cairo belong; but if of that of the *Ihan'afees*, *four rek'ahs*.

† There are some trifling differences in the forms of salutations on the Prophet in the Friday-prayers in different mosques: I describe what is most common.

‡ A kind of lizard, the *lacerta Libyca*.

§ In the great mosque *El-Az'har*, there are several *Moobal'lighs* in different places, to make the *ada'n* heard to the whole congregation.



Khatee'b, or Ima'm, comes to the foot of the pulpit, takes the wooden sword from the Mooruck'ckee's hand, ascends the pulpit, and sits on the top step or platform. The pulpit of a large mosque, on this day, is decorated with two flags, with the profession of the faith, or the names of God and Mohham'mad, worked upon them: these are fixed at the top of the stairs, slanting forward. The Mooruck'ckee and Moobal'lighs having finished the ada'n, the former repeats a tradition of the Prophet, saying, "The Prophet, upon whom be blessing and peace, hath said, 'If thou hast said unto thy companion while the Ima'm is preaching on Friday, Be thou silent, thou hast spoken rashly.' Be ye silent: ye shall be rewarded: God shall recompense you" He then sits down. The Khatee'b now rises, and, holding the wooden sword\* in the same manner as the Mooruck'ckee did, delivers an exhortation, called *khool'bet el-waaz*. As the reader may be curious to see a translation of a Mohhammadan sermon, I insert one. The following is a sermon preached on the first Friday of the Arab year†. The original, as usual, is in rhyming prose.

"Praise be to God, the renewer of years, and the multiplier of favours, and the creator of months and days, according to the most perfect wisdom and most admirable judgment; who hath dignified the months of the Arabs above all months, and pronounced that

\* To commemorate the acquisition of Egypt by the sword.

† During my first visit to Egypt, I went to the great mosque El-Azhar, to witness the performance of the Friday-prayers by the largest congregation in Cairo. I was pleased with the preaching of the Khatee'b of the mosque, Ga'd El-Mowla, and afterwards procured his sermon-book (*deew'n khool'ab*), containing sermons for every Friday in the year, and for the two 'eeds, or grand festivals. I translate the first sermon.



among the more excellent of them is El-Mohhar'ram the Sacred, and commenced with it the year, as he hath closed it with Zoo-l-Hheg'geh. How propitious is the beginning, and how good is the end! [I assert] his absolute glory, exempting Him from the association of any other deity with Him. He hath well considered what He hath formed, and established what He hath contrived, and He alone hath the power to create and to annihilate. I praise Him, asserting his absolute glory, and exalting his name, for the knowledge and inspiration which He hath graciously vouchsafed; and I testify that there is no deity but God alone; He hath no companion; He is the most holy King; the [God of] peace: and I testify that our lord and our Prophet and our friend Mohham'mad is his servant, and his apostle, and his elect, and his intimate, the guide of the way, and the lamp of the dark. O God! favour and preserve and bless this noble Prophet, and chief and excellent apostle, the merciful-hearted, our lord Mohham'mad, and his family, and his companions, and his wives, and his posterity, and the people of his house, the noble persons! and preserve them amply! O servants of God! your lives have been gradually curtailed, and year after year has passed away, and ye are sleeping on the bed of indolence and on the pillow of stubbornness. Ye pass by the tombs of your predecessors, and fear not the assault of destiny and destruction, as if others departed from the world and ye must of necessity remain in it. Ye rejoice at the arrival of new years, as if they brought an increase to the term of life, and swim in the seas of desires, and enlarge your hopes, and in every way exceed other people [in presumption], and ye are sluggish in doing good. O how great a calamity is



this ! God teacheth by an allegory. Know ye not that in the curtailment of time by indolence and sleep there is very great trouble ? Know ye not that in the cutting short of lives by the termination of years is a very great warning ? Know ye not that the night and day divide the lives of numerous souls ? Know ye not that health and capacity are two blessings coveted by many men ? But the truth hath become manifest to those who have eyes. Ye are now between two years : one year hath passed away, and come to an end, with its evils ; and ye have entered upon another year, in which, if it please God, mankind shall be relieved. Is any of you determining upon diligence [in doing good] in the year to come ? or repenting of his failings in the times that are passed ? The happy is he who makes amends for the time passed in the time to come ; and the miserable is he whose days pass away and he is careless of his time. This new year hath arrived, and the sacred month of God hath come with blessings to you,—the first of the months of the year, and of the four sacred months, as hath been said, and the most worthy of preference and honour and reverence : its fast is the most excellent of fasts after that which is incumbent \*, and the doing of good in it is among the most excellent of the objects of desire. Whosoever desires to reap advantage from it, let him fast the ninth and tenth days, looking for aid. Abstain not from this fast through indolence, and esteeming it a hardship ; but comply with it in the best manner, and honour it with the best of honours, and improve your time by the worship of God, morning and evening. Turn unto God with repentance, before the assault of death : He is the God who accepteth repent-

\* That of the month of Rum'ada'n.



ance of his servants, and pardoneth sins.—*The Tradition* \*.—The Apostle of God (God favour and preserve him !) hath said, ‘The most excellent prayer, after the prescribed †, is the prayer that is said in the night; and the most excellent fast, after Rum’ada’n, is that of the month of God, El-Mohhar’ram.’”

The Khatee'b, having concluded his exhortation, says to the congregation, “Supplicate God.” He then sits down, and prays privately; and each member of the congregation at the same time offers up some private petition, as after the ordinary prayers, holding his hands before him (looking at the palms), and then drawing them down his face. This done, the Moobal'ighs say “A'mee'n! A'mee'n! [Amen! Amen!] O Lord of all creatures!”—The Khatee'b now rises again, and recites another Khoot'beh, called *khoot'bet en-naat*, of which the following is a translation ‡:—

“Praise be to God, abundant praise, as He hath commanded! I testify that there is no deity but God alone: He hath no companion: affirming his supremacy, and condemning him who denieth and disbelieveth: and I testify that our lord and our Prophet Mohham'mad is his servant and his apostle, the lord of mankind, the intercessor, the accepted intercessor, on the day of assembling: God favour him and his family as long as the eye seeth and the ear heareth! O people! reverence God by doing what He hath commanded, and abstain from that which He hath forbidden and prohibited. The happy is he who obeyeth, and the miserable is he who

\* The Khatee'b always closes his exhortation with one or two traditions of the Prophet.

† The five daily prayers ordained by the Ckoor-a'n.

‡ This is always the same, or nearly so.



opposeth and sinneth. Know that the present world is a transitory abode, and that the world to come is a lasting abode. Make provision, therefore, in your transitory state for your lasting state, and prepare for your reckoning and standing before your Lord: for know that ye shall to-morrow be placed before God, and reckoned with according to your deeds; and before the Lord of Might ye shall be present, ‘and those who have acted unjustly shall know with what an overthrowal they shall be overthrown\*.’ Know that God, whose absolute glory I assert, and whose name be exalted, hath said (and ceaseth not to say wisely, and to command judiciously, warning you, and teaching, and honouring the dignity of your Prophet, extolling and magnifying him), ‘Verily, God favoureth, and his angels bless, the Prophet: O ye who believe, bless him, and greet him with a salutation†!’ O God! favour Mohham’mad and the family of Mohham’mad, as Thou favouredst Ibrahee’m‡ and the family of Ibrahee’m; and bless Mohham’mad and the family of Mohham’mad, as Thou blessedst Ibrahee’m and the family of Ibrahee’m, among all creatures—for Thou art praiseworthy and glorious! O God! do Thou also be well pleased with the four Kha-lee’fehs, the orthodox lords, of high dignity and illustrious honour, Ab’oo Bekr Es-Siddee’ck, and ‘Om’ar, and ‘Osma’n, and ‘Al’ee; and be Thou well pleased, O God! with the six who remained of the ten noble and just persons who swore allegiance to thy Prophet Mohham’mad (God favour and preserve him!) under the tree; (for Thou art the Lord of piety, and the Lord of pardon,)

\* Ckooor-a’n, chap. xxvi., last verse.

† Idem., chap. xxxiii, ver. 56.      ‡ The patriarch Abraham.



those persons of excellence and clemency, and rectitude and prosperity, Tal'hah, and Ez-Zoobey'r, and Saad, and Sa'ee'd, and 'Abd Er-Rahhma'n Ib'n 'Owf, and Ab'oo 'Obey'deh 'A'mir Ibn El-Garra'h'h; and with all the Companions of the Apostle of God! (God favour and preserve him!); and be Thou well pleased, O God! with the two martyred descendants, the two bright moons, 'the two lords of the youths of the people of Paradise in Paradise,' the two sweet-smelling flowers of the Prophet of this nation, Ab'oo Mohham'mad El-Hhas'an, and Ab'oo 'Abd Al'lah El-Hhosey'n: and be Thou well pleased, O God! with their mother, the daughter of the Apostle of God (God favour and preserve him!), Fa'timeh Ez-Zah'ra, and with their grandmother Khadee'geh El-Koob'ra, and with 'A'isheh, the mother of the faithful, and with the rest of the pure wives, and with the generation which succeeded the Companions, and the generation which succeeded that, with beneficence to the day of judgment! O God! pardon the believing men and the believing women, and the Moos'lim men and the Moos'lim women, those who are living, and the dead; for Thou art a hearer near, an answerer of prayers, O Lord of all creatures! O God! aid El-Isla'm, and strengthen its pillars, and make infidelity to tremble, and destroy its power, by the preservation of thy servant, and the son of thy servant, the submissive to the might of thy majesty and glory, whom God hath aided, by the care of the Adored King, our master the Soolta'n, son of the Soolta'n, the Soolta'n Mahhmoo'd Kha'n: may God assist him, and prolong [his reign]! O God! assist him, and assist his armies! O thou 'Lord of the religion, and of the world present, and the world to come! O Lord of all creatures! O



God ! assist the forces of the Moos'lims and the armies of the Unitarians ! O God ! frustrate the infidels and polytheists, thine enemies, the enemies of the religion ! O God ! invert their banners, and ruin their habitations, and give them and their wealth as booty to the Moos'lims\* ! O God ! unloose the captivity of the captives, and annul the debts of the debtors ; and make this town to be safe and secure, and blessed with wealth and plenty, and all the towns of the Moos'lims, O Lord of all creatures ! and decree safety and health to us and to all travellers, and pilgrims, and warriors, and wanderers, upon thy earth, and upon thy sea, such as are Moos'lims, O Lord of all creatures ! ' O Lord ! we have acted unjustly towards our own souls, and if Thou forgive us not and be merciful unto us, we shall surely be of those who perish †.' I beg of God, the Great, that He may forgive me and you, and all the people of Mohham'mad, the servants of God. ' Verily God commandeth justice, and the doing of good, and giving [what is due] to kindred ; and forbiddeth wickedness, and iniquity, and oppression : he admonisheth you that ye may remember ‡.' Remember God ; He will remember you : and thank Him ; He will increase to you [your blessings]. Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures !''

During the rise of the Nile, a good inundation is also

\* This sentence, beginning " O God, frustrate," was not inserted in one copy of this prayer, which I obtained from an Ima'm. Another Ima'm, at whose dictation I wrote the copy here translated, told me that this sentence and some others were often omitted.

† Ckoor-a'n, chap. vii., v. 22.

‡ Ibid., chap. xvi., v. 92.



prayed for in this Khoot'beh. The Khatee'b, or Ima'm, having ended it, descends from the pulpit, and the Moobal'lighs chant the *icka'meh* (described in page 90) : the Ima'm, stationed before the niche, then recites the *furd* prayers of Friday, which consist of two rek'ahs, and are similar to the ordinary prayers. The people do the same, but silently, and keeping time exactly with the Ima'm in the various postures. Those who are of the Ma'likee sect then leave the mosque; and so also do many persons of the other sects: but some of the Sha'fe'ees and Hhan'afees (there are scarcely any Hham'bel'ees in Cairo) remain, and recite the *ordinary furd* prayers of noon; forming a number of separate groups, in each of which one acts as Ima'm. The rich, on going out of the mosque, often give alms to the poor outside the door.

I have spoken thus fully of Mohhammadan worship, because my countrymen in general have very imperfect and erroneous notions on this subject; many of them even imagining that the Moos'lims ordinarily pray to their *Prophet* as well as to God. Invocations to the Prophet, for his *intercession*, are, indeed, frequently made, particularly at his tomb, where pious visitors generally say, "We ask thy intercession, O Apostle of God!" The Moos'lims, also, even implore the intercession of their numerous saints.

The duty next in importance to prayer is that of giving *alms*. Certain alms are prescribed by law, and are called *zek'ah*: others, called *sud'ackah*, are voluntary. The former, or obligatory alms, were, in the earlier ages of El-Isla'm, collected by officers appointed by the sovereign, for pious uses, such as building mosques, &c.; but now it is left to the Moos'lim's con-



science to give them, and to apply them in what manner he thinks fit; that is, to bestow them upon whatever needy persons he may choose. They are to be given once in every year, of cattle and sheep, generally in the proportion of one in forty, two in a hundred and twenty; of camels, for every five, a ewe; or for twenty-five, a pregnant camel; and likewise of money, and, among the Hhan'afees, of merchandize, &c. He who has money to the amount of two hundred dir'hems (or drams) of silver, or twenty mitcka'ls (*i. e.* thirty drams) of gold (or, among the Hhan'afees, the value of the above in gold or silver ornaments, utensils, &c.), must annually give the fortieth part (*roobā el-'oshr*), or the value of that part.

*Fasting* is the next duty. The Moos'lim is commanded to fast during the whole month of Rum'ada'n\* every day, from the first appearance of day-break, or rather from the hour when there is sufficient light for a person to distinguish plainly a white thread from a black thread† (about two hours before sunrise in Egypt), until sunset. He must abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, smelling perfumes, and every unnecessary indulgence or pleasure of a worldly nature; even from intentionally swallowing his spittle. When Rum'ada'n falls in summer‡ the fast is very severe; the abstinence from drinking being most painfully felt. Persons who are sick, or on a journey, and soldiers in time of war, are not obliged to observe the fast during

\* Because the Prophet received the first revelation in that month.

† Ckoor-a'n, chap. ii., v. 183.

‡ The year being lunar, each month retrogrades through all the seasons in the course of about thirty-three years and a half.



Rum'ada'n ; but if they do not keep it in this month they should fast an equal number of days at a future time. Fasting is also to be dispensed with in the cases of a nurse and pregnant woman. The Prophet even disapproved of any person's keeping the fast of Rum'ada'n if not perfectly able ; and desired no man to fast so much as to injure his health, or disqualify himself for necessary labour. The modern Moos'lims seem to regard the fast of Rum'ada'n as of more importance than any other religious act, for many of them keep this fast who neglect their daily prayers ; and even those who break the fast, with very few exceptions, pretend to keep it. Many Moos'lims of the wealthy classes eat and drink in secret during Rum'ada'n ; but the greater number strictly keep the fast, which is fatal to numerous persons in a weak state of health. There are some other days on which it is considered meritorious to fast, but not absolutely necessary. On the two grand festivals, namely, that following Rum'ada'n, and that which succeeds the pilgrimage, it is *unlawful* to fast, being expressly forbidden by the Prophet.

The last of the four most important duties, that of *pilgrimage*, remains to be noticed. It is incumbent on every Moos'lim to perform, once in his life, the pilgrimage to Mek'keh and Mount 'Arafa't, unless poverty or ill health prevent him ; or, if a Hhan'afee, he may send a deputy, whose expenses he must pay\*. Many, however, neglect the duty of pilgrimage who cannot plead a lawful excuse ; nor are they reproached for so doing. It is not by the visit to Mek'keh, and the performance

\* A Ma'likee is held bound to perform the pilgrimage if strong enough to bear the journey on foot, and able to earn his food on the way.



of the ceremonies of circuiting the Ka'abeh seven times and kissing the "black stone" in each round, and other rites in the Holy City, that the Moos'lim acquires the title of *el-hha'gg*\* (or the pilgrim); the final object of the pilgrimage is Mount 'Arafa't, six hours' journey distant from Mek'keh. During his performance of the required ceremonies in Mek'keh, and also during his journey to 'Arafa't, and until his completion of the pilgrimage, the Moos'lim wears a peculiar dress, called *chhra'm* (vulgarly *lhhera'm*), generally consisting of two simple pieces of cotton, or linen, or woollen cloth, without seam or ornament, one of which is wrapped round the loins, and the other thrown over the shoulders: the instep and heel of each foot, and the head, must be bare; but umbrellas are now used by many of the pilgrims. It is necessary that the pilgrim be present on the occasion of a Khoot'beh which is recited on Mount 'Arafa't in the afternoon of the 9th of the month of Zoo-l-Ihheg'geh. In the ensuing evening, after sunset, the pilgrims commence their return to Mek'keh. Halting the following day in the valley of Min'a (or, as it is more commonly called, Moon'a), they complete the ceremonies of the pilgrimage by a sacrifice (of one or more male sheep, he-goats, cows, or she-camels, part of the flesh of which they eat, and part give to the poor), and by shaving the head and clipping the nails. Every one, after this, resumes his usual dress, or puts on a new one, if provided with such. The sacrifice is called *el-fid'a* (or the ransom), as it is performed in commemoration of the ransom of Isma'ee'l (or Ishmael) by

\* On the pronunciation of this word, see a note to the second paragraph of Chapter V.



the sacrifice of the ram, when he was himself about to have been offered up by his father : for it is the general opinion of the Moos'lims that it was this son, not Isaac, who was to have been sacrificed by his father.

There are other ordinances, more or less connected with those which have been already explained.

The two festivals, called *el-'Eed es-Sooghei'yir\**, or the Lesser Festival, and *el-'Eed el-Kebec'r*, or the Great Festival, the occasions of which have been mentioned above, are observed with public prayer and general rejoicing. Each of these lasts three days. The festivities with which they are celebrated will be described in a subsequent chapter. On the first day of the latter festival (being that on which the pilgrims perform their sacrifice), every other Moos'lim should slay a victim if he can afford to purchase one. The wealthy slay several sheep, or a sheep or two and a buffalo, and distribute the greater portion of the meat to the poor. The slaughter may be performed by a deputy.

The duty of waging war against infidels is strongly and repeatedly urged in the C'koor-a'n ; and he who dies fighting for the defence or propagation of El-Isla'm is promised the rewards of a martyr. As the Jews were ordered to exterminate heathen nations, so the Moos'lims are commanded to put to death every idolater who refuses to embrace the Moh'hammadan faith, and to exact an annual tribute from Jews and Christians who show the like resolution. The Moos'lims are even forbidden to contract friendship with any unbelievers.

There are certain prohibitory laws in the C'koor-a'n

\* More properly, *Saghee'r*. This is what many travellers have incorrectly called "the Great Festival."



which must be mentioned here, as remarkably affecting the moral and social condition of its disciples.

Wine and all inebriating liquors are forbidden, as being the cause of "more evil than profit." \* Many of the Moos'lims, however, in the present day, drink wine, brandy, &c., in secret; and some, thinking it no sin to indulge thus in moderation, scruple not to do so openly; but among the Egyptians there are few who transgress in this flagrant manner. *Boo'zeh*, which is an intoxicating liquor made with barley-bread, crumbled, mixed with water, strained, and left to ferment, is commonly drunk by the boatmen of the Nile, and by other persons of the lower orders †. Opium, and other drugs which produce a similar effect, are considered unlawful, though not mentioned in the C'koor-a'n; and persons who are addicted to taking these drugs are regarded as immoral characters; but, in Egypt, such persons are not very numerous. Some sectarians have pronounced tobacco, and even coffee, to be unlawful.

The eating of swine's flesh is strictly forbidden. The unwholesome effects of that meat in a hot climate would be a sufficient reason for the prohibition; but the pig is held in abhorrence by the Moos'lim chiefly on account of its extremely filthy habits ‡. Most animals prohibited for food by the Mosaic law are alike forbidden to the Moos'lim; the camel is an exception. The Moos'lim is

C'koor a'n, chap. ii., v. 216.

A similar beverage, thus prepared from barley, was used by the ancient Egyptians. (Herodotus, lib. ii., cap. 77.) The modern inhabitants of Egypt also prepare *boo'zeh* from wheat and from millet in the same manner, but less commonly.

‡ The swine was universally deemed impure by the ancient Egyptians. (Herodotus, lib. ii., cap. 47.)



“ forbidden [to eat] that which dieth of itself, and blood, and swine's flesh, and that on which the name of any beside God hath been invoked; and that which hath been strangled, or killed by a blow, or by a fall, or by the horns [of another beast]; and that which hath been eaten by a wild beast, except what he shall [himself] kill; and that which hath been sacrificed unto idols \*.”

An animal that is killed for the food of man must be slaughtered in a particular manner: the person who is about to perform the operation must say, “ In the name of God! God is most great!” and then cut its throat, taking care to divide the windpipe, gullet, and carotid arteries. It is forbidden to employ, in this case, the phrase which is so often made use of on other occasions, “ In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!” because the mention of the most benevolent epithets of the Deity on such an occasion would seem like a mockery of the sufferings which the animal is about to endure. Some persons in Egypt, but mostly women, when about to kill an animal for food, say, “ In the name of God! God is most great! God give thee patience to endure the affliction which he hath allotted thee †!” If the sentiment which first dictated this prayer were always felt, it would present a beautiful trait in the character of the people who use it. In cases of necessity, when in danger of starving, the Moos'lim is allowed to eat any food which is prohibited under other circumstances. The mode of slaughter above described is, of course, only required to be practised in the cases of domestic animals. Most kinds of

\* Ckoor-a'n, ch. v., v. 4

† The Arabic words of this prayer, “ God give thee patience,” &c., are *All'lah yoosub'brak 'al'a ma' bela'h.*



fish are lawful food \*; so also are many birds, the tame kinds of which must be killed in the same manner as cattle; but the wild may be shot. The hare, rabbit, gazelle, &c. are lawful, and may either be shot or killed by a dog, provided the name of God was uttered at the time of slipping the dog, and he have not eaten any part of the prey. This animal, however, is considered very unclean: the Sha'fe'ees hold themselves to be polluted by the touch of its nose if it be wet, and if any part of their clothes be so touched, they must wash that part with seven waters, and once with clean earth: some others are only careful not to let the animal lick, or defile in a worse manner, their persons or their dress, &c.

Gambling and usury are also prohibited, and all games of chance; and likewise the making of images or pictures of anything that has life†. The Prophet declared that every representation of this kind would be placed before its author on the day of judgment, and that he would be commanded to put life into it; which not being able to do, he would be cast, for a time, into Hell.

The principal *civil laws* of the Ckoor-a'n and the Traditions, &c, remain to be stated. These laws are partly founded upon the customs of the Pagan Arabs, but mostly upon the Jewish Scriptures and traditions.

\* \* In some respects, the Moos'lim code does not appear to be so strictly founded upon exigencies of a sanatory nature as the Mosaic. See Leviticus, xi., 9—12. In Egypt, fish which have not scales are generally found to be unwholesome food.

† Many of the Moos'lms hold that only sculptures which cast a shadow, representing living creatures, are unlawful; but the Prophet certainly condemned pictures also.



The civil laws are chiefly derived from the Ckoor-a'n\* ; but, in many important cases, this highest authority affords no precept. In most of these cases the Traditions of the Prophet direct the decisions of the judge†. There are, however, some important cases, and many of an inferior kind, respecting which both the Ckoor-a'n and the Traditions are silent. These are decided on the authority of one of the four great Ima'ms, or founders of the four orthodox sects of El-Isla'm ; on the authority of the Ima'm of that sect to which the ruling power belongs, which sect, in Egypt, and throughout the Turkish empire, is that of the Hhan'afees ; or, if none of the decisions of the Ima'm relate to a case in dispute (which not unfrequently happens), judgment is given, in that case, on the authority of some other eminent doctor. In general, only the principal laws, as laid down in the Ckoor-a'n, will be here stated.

It seems to be well ascertained that *polygamy* is as unfavourable to population as it is injurious to domestic happiness, to morality, and to the exercise and improvement of the nobler powers of the mind ; and, in justice to the legislator of the Moos'lims, we should remark, that, instead of introducing or encouraging, he limited this licence : it is true that he assumed to himself the privilege of having a greater number of wives than he allowed to others, but, in doing so, he may have been actuated by the want of male offspring rather than impelled by voluptuousness. The law respecting *marriage* and *concubinage*, though express as to the number of wives whom the Moos'lim may

\* A law given in the Ckoor-a'n is called *furd*.

† A law derived from the Traditions is called *soon'neh*.



have at the same time, namely *four*, is not considered by the less strict as perfectly explicit with regard to the number of concubines he may keep. It is written, "Take in marriage, of the women who please you, two, three, or four; but if ye fear that ye cannot act equitably [to so many, take] ~~one~~; ~~one~~ [take] those whom your right hands have acquired \*," that is, slaves. Many of the wealthy Moos'lims, interpreting this text according to their desires, marry two, three, or four wives, and keep, besides, several concubine slaves. When a female slave becomes a mother by her master, the child which she bears to him is free; and she herself cannot afterwards be sold by her master (though she must continue to serve him and be his concubine), and is entitled to emancipation at his death. Her bearing a child to him is called the cause of her emancipation or liberty, but does not oblige him to emancipate her as long as he lives, though it is commendable if he do so, and make her his wife, provided he have not already four wives, or if he marry her to another man, should it be her wish. It is held lawful for a Moos'lim to marry a Christian, or a Jewish woman, if induced to do so by excessive love of her, or if he cannot obtain a wife of his own faith. In this case the offspring must follow the father's faith, and the wife does not inherit when the husband dies. A Mohhamadan woman cannot, however, under any circumstances but by force, marry a man of another faith. The degrees of relationship in which marriage is prohibited are stated in the 26th and 27th verses of the 4th chapter of the Ckoor-a'n, where it is said, "Marry not women whom your fathers have had to wife." "Ye are forbidden to

\* Ckoor-a'n, chap. iv., v. 3.



marry your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your aunts both on the father's and on the mother's side, and your brother's daughters, and your sister's daughters, and your foster-mothers, and your foster-sisters, and your wives' mothers, and your step-daughters which are under your tuition, born of your wives," "and the wives of your sons;" "and ye are forbidden to take to you two sisters, as your wives." It is lawful for the Moos'lim to see the faces of these women whom he is forbidden to marry, but of no others, excepting his own wives and female slaves. The marriage of a man and woman, or of a man and a girl who has arrived at puberty, is lawfully effected by their declaring (which the latter generally does by a *wekee'l*, or deputy) their consent to marry each other, in the presence of two witnesses (if witnesses can be procured), and by the payment, or part-payment, of a dowry. But the consent of a girl under age is not required; her father, or paternal grandfather, or her mother, uncle, or any other person appointed by will, or by the Cka'dee, acting for her as he pleases\*. The giving a dowry is indispensable, and the least sum that is allowed by law is ten *dir'hems* (or drams of silver), which is equal to about five shillings of our money. A man may legally marry a woman without mentioning a dowry; but after the consummation of the marriage, she can, in this case, compel him to pay the sum of ten *dir'hems*†.

A man may divorce his wife twice, and each time take her back, without any ceremony, excepting in a case

\* A boy may be thus married, but he may divorce his wife.

† Whatever property the wife receives from her husband, parents, or any other person, is entirely at her own disposal, and not subject to any claim of her husband or his creditors.



to be mentioned below ; but if he divorce her the third time, or put her away by a triple divorce conveyed in one sentence, he cannot receive her again until she has been married and divorced by another husband, who must have consummated his marriage with her.\* When a man divorces his wife (which he does by merely saying, "Thou art divorced," or "I divorce thee"), he pays her a portion of her dowry (generally one-third), which he had kept back from the first, to be paid on this occasion, or at his death ; and she takes away with her the furniture, &c., which she brought at her marriage. He may thus put her away from mere dislike †, and without assigning any reason, but a woman cannot separate herself from her husband against his will, unless it be for some considerable fault on his part, as cruel treatment, or neglect ; and even then, application to the Cka'dee's court is generally necessary to compel the man to divorce her, and she forfeits the above-mentioned remnant of the dowry.

The first and second divorce, if made without any mutual agreement for a compensation from the woman, or a pecuniary sacrifice on her part, is termed *tala'ck reg'ee* (a divorce which admits of return) ; because the husband may take back his wife, without her consent, during the period of her *'ed'deh* (which will be presently explained), but not after, unless with her consent, and by a new contract. If he divorce her the first or second time for a compensation, she perhaps requesting, "Divorce me for what thou owest me," or "— hast of mine," (that is, of the dowry, furniture, &c.), or for an addi-

\* Ckoor-a'n, ch. ii., ver. 229, 230.

† As the Mosaic law also allows. See Deut. xxiv. 1.



tional sum, he<sup>e</sup> cannot take her again but by her own consent, and by a new contract. This is a *tala'ck ba'in* (or separating divorce), and is termed "the lesser separation," to distinguish it from the third divorce, which is called "the greater separation." The '*ed'deh*' is the period during which a divorced woman, or a widow, must wait before marrying again,—in either case, if pregnant, until delivery: otherwise, the former must wait three lunar periods, or three months; and the latter, four months and ten days. A woman who is divorced when in a state of pregnancy, though she may make a new contract of marriage immediately after her delivery, must wait forty days longer before she can complete her marriage by receiving her husband. The man who divorces his wife must maintain her in his own house, or in that of her parents, or elsewhere, during the period of her '*ed'deh*'; but must cease to live with her as her husband from the commencement of that period. A divorced woman who has a son under two years of age may retain him until he has attained that age, and may be compelled to do so by the law of the Sha'fe'ees; and, by the law of the Ma'likees, until he has arrived at puberty; but the Hhan'afee law limits the period during which the boy should remain under her care to seven years: her daughter she should retain until nine years of age, or the period of puberty. If a man divorce his wife before the consummation of marriage, he must pay her half the sum which he has promised to give her as a dowry; or, if he have promised no dowry, he must pay her the half of the smallest dowry allowed by law, which has been above mentioned; and she may marry again immediately.

When a wife refuses to obey the lawful commands of



her husband, he may, and generally does, take her, or two witnesses\* against her, to the Cka'dee's court, to prefer a complaint against her; and, if the case be proved, a certificate is written declaring the woman *na'shizeh*, or rebellious against her husband. This process is termed "writing a woman *na'shizeh*." It exempts her husband from the obligation to lodge, clothe, and maintain her. He is not obliged to divorce her; and, by refusing to do this, he may prevent her marrying another man as long as he lives; but, if she promise to be obedient afterwards, he must take her back, and maintain her, or divorce her. It is more common, however, for a wife whose husband refuses to divorce her, if she have parents or other relations able and willing to support her comfortably, to make a complaint at the Cka'dee's court, stating her husband's conduct to be of such a nature towards her that she will not live with him, and thus cause herself to be registered "*na'shizeh*," and separated from him. In this case, the husband generally persists, from mere spite, in refusing to divorce her.

To establish a charge of infidelity against a wife, four eye-witnesses of her crime are necessary†. If convicted thus, she is to be put to death by stoning‡. It need scarcely be said that cases of this kind have very seldom occurred, from the difficulty of obtaining such testimony§.

\* The witnesses must always be Moos'lims in accusations against a person of the same faith.

† Ckoor-a'n, chap. iv., v. 19.

‡ This is a *soon'neh* law, or founded on tradition. The law is the same in the case of the adulterer, if married; but it is never enforced. See Leviticus, xx., 10, and John, viii., 4, 5.

§ It is worthy of remark, that the circumstance which occasioned the promulgation of this extraordinary law was an accu-



Further laws on this subject, and still more favourable to the women, are given in the Ckoor-a'n\*, in the following words:—"But [as to] those who accuse women of reputation [of fornication or adultery], and produce not four witnesses [of the fact], scourge them with eighty stripes, and receive not their testimony for ever; for such are infamous prevaricators; excepting those who shall afterwards repent; for God is gracious and merciful. They who shall accuse their wives [of adultery], and shall have no witnesses [thereof] besides themselves, the testimony [which shall be required] of one of them [shall be], that he swear four times by God that he speaketh the truth, and the fifth [time that he imprecate] the curse of God on him if he be a liar; and it shall avert the punishment [of the wife] if she swear four times by God that he is a liar, and if the fifth [time she imprecate] the wrath of God on her if he speak the truth." The commentators and lawyers have agreed that, under these circumstances, the marriage must be dissolved. In the chapter from which the above quotation is made (v. 2), it is ordained that unmarried persons convicted of fornication shall be punished by scourging, with a hundred stripes; and a Soon'neh law renders them obnoxious to the further punishment of banishment for a whole year†. Of the

sation of adultery preferred against the Prophet's favourite wife, 'A'isheh: she was thus absolved from punishment, and her reputation was cleared by additional "revelations."

\* Chap. xxiv., vv. 4—9.

† An unmarried person, convicted of adultery, is also obnoxious only to this punishment. The two laws mentioned in Leviticus, xx., 13 and 15, have been introduced into the Mohhamadan code; but, in the present day, they are never executed.



punishment of women convicted of incontinence in Cairo, I shall speak in the next chapter, as it is an arbitrary act of the government, not founded on the laws of the Ckoor-a'n or Traditions\*. No distinction is made between the children of wives and those of concubine slaves: they inherit equally.

The most remarkable general principles of the laws of *inheritance* are the denial of any privileges to primogeniture†, and awarding to a female a share equal to half that of a male of the same degree of relationship to the deceased. A man may bequeath to any persons, or for any purpose, one-third of his property, but not a larger portion. The children of a man deceased inherit his whole property, or all of it that he has not otherwise lawfully disposed of, or what remains after paying his lawful legacies and debts, if neither of his parents be living, nor any wife; and the portion of a male is double that of a female. If they be females only, and two or more in number, they receive, by the law of the Ckoor-a'n, two-thirds; or if there be but one child, and that a female, she receives, by the same law, half the property; but the remaining third or half is also given up to the said daughters or daughter, by a law of the Soon'neh, if there be no other relations to whom it may be awarded. If the parents of the deceased be living‡, they have each one-sixth of the property if he leave

\* In the villages of Egypt, a woman found, or suspected, to have been guilty of this crime, if she be not a common prostitute, often experiences a different fate, which will be described in the account of the domestic life and customs of the lower orders.

† In this, the Moos'lim law differs from the Mosaic, which appropriates a double portion to the first-born. See Deut. xxi., 17.

‡ Or the grandfather or grandmother



children ; and, if there be no children †, his father receives two-thirds, and his mother the remaining third ; or, if there be brothers of the deceased, the mother has only one-sixth, and the said brothers have one-sixth. If there be brothers and sisters of the deceased, but no parents, nor children, nor wives, the property is divided among them ; the share of a male being double that of a female. If only one sister of the deceased be living, and there be neither parents, nor brothers, nor children, nor wives, she enjoys the same right as the female only child of a man who leaves neither parent nor wife ; or, if there be two or more sisters, in such case their right is the same as that of two or more daughters of a man who leaves neither son, nor parent, nor wife. One-eighth only is the share of the wife, or wives, if there be issue ; and one-fourth if there be no issue ‡. A man inherits half his wife's property if she have left no issue, and one-fourth if she have left issue. In all cases, the debts and legacies (if there be any) of the deceased must be first paid §. The laws respecting cases in which no near relations of the deceased exist are found in the Traditions of the Prophet, and the decisions of the Ima'ms ||. In Egypt, the property of the deceased is nominally divided into *ckeera'ts*, or twenty-fourth parts ; and the share of each son or other heir is said to be so many *ckeera'ts*.

\* Or grandchildren.

† Idem.

‡ This is exclusive of what may remain due to her of her dowry ; of which one-third is usually held in reserve by the husband, to be paid to her if he divorce her, or when he dies.

§ Ckoor-a'n, chap. iv., vv. 12—14, and 175.

|| A bastard inherits from his mother, but not from his father.



The law is remarkably lenient towards *debtors*. “If there be any [debtor]”, says the Ckoor-a’n\*, “under a difficulty [of paying his debt], let [his creditor] wait till it be easy [for him to do it]; but if ye remit it as alms, it will be better for you, if ye knew it.” The Moos’lim is commanded (in the chapter from which the above extract is taken), when he contracts a debt, to cause a statement of it to be written, and attested by two men, or a man and two women, of his own faith. The debtor is imprisoned for non-payment of his debt; but, if he establish his insolvency, he is liberated. He may be compelled to work for the discharge of his debt, if able.

It is ordained that *murder* shall be punished with death, or that the perpetrator shall pay, to the heirs of the person whom he has killed, a fine, which is to be divided according to the laws of inheritance; and it is optional with the said heirs to decree whether the murderer shall be put to death or the fine accepted†. By the Hhan’afee code, the free may be put to death for the murder of a slave; but not the parent for the offspring. In the present day, however, murder is generally punished with death; the government seldom allowing a composition in money to be made. The Bed’awees have made the law of the avenging of blood terribly severe and unjust, transgressing the limits assigned by the Ckoor-a’n: for, with them, any single person descended from the homicide, or from the homicide’s father, grandfather, great-grandfather, or great-grandfather’s father, may be killed by any of such relations of the person murdered or killed in

\* Chap. ii., v. 280.

† Ckoor-a’n, chap. ii., v. 173.



fight; but, among most tribes, the fine is generally accepted instead of the blood. Cases of blood-revenge are very common among the peasantry of Egypt, who, as I have before remarked, retain many customs of their Bed'awee ancestors. The relations of a person who has been killed, in an Egyptian village, generally retaliate with their own hands rather than apply to the government, and often do so with disgusting cruelty, and even mangle and insult the corpse of their victim. The relations of a homicide usually fly from their own to another village, for protection. Even when retaliation has been made, animosity frequently continues between the two parties for many years; and often a case of blood-revenge involves the inhabitants of two or more villages in hostilities, which are renewed, at intervals, during the period of several generations. A woman, convicted of a capital crime, is generally put to death by drowning in the Nile.

*Theft*, according to the Ckoor-a'n\*, is to be punished by cutting off the offender's right hand for the first offence; but a Soon'neh law ordains that this punishment shall not be inflicted if the value of the stolen property be less than a quarter of a deena'r†; and it is also held necessary, to render the thief obnoxious to this punishment, that the property stolen should have been deposited in a place to which he had not ordinary or easy access: whence it follows, that a man who steals in the house of a near relation is not subject to this punishment;

\* Chap. v., v. 42.

† The deena'r is a mitcka'l (or nearly 72 English grains) of gold. Sale, copying a false translation by Marracci, and neglecting to examine the Arabic text quoted by the latter, has stated the sum in question to be four deena'rs.



nor is a slave who robs the house of his master. For the second offence, the left foot is to be cut off; for the third, the left hand; for the fourth, the right foot; and, for further offences of the same kind, the culprit is to be flogged or beaten. A man may steal a free-born infant without offending against the law, because it is not property; but not a slave: and the hand is not to be cut off for stealing any article of food that is quickly perishable; because it may have been taken to supply the immediate demands of hunger. There are also some other cases in which the thief is exempt from the punishments above mentioned. In Egypt, of late years, these punishments have not been inflicted. Beating and hard labour have been substituted for the first, second, or third offence, and frequently death for the fourth. Most petty offences are usually punished by beating with the *koor-ba'g* (a thong or whip of hippopotamus' hide, hammered into a round form), or with a stick, generally on the soles of the feet\*.

*Drunkenness* was punished, by the Prophet, by flogging; and is still in Cairo, though not often: the *hhadd*, or number of stripes, for this offence, is eighty.

*Apostacy* from the Mohhammadan faith is considered a most heinous sin, and must be punished with death, unless the apostate will recant on being thrice warned. I once saw a woman paraded through the streets of Cairo, and afterwards taken down to the Nile to be drowned, for having apostatized from the faith of Mohham'mad, and having married a Christian. Unfortunately, she had tattooed a blue cross on her arm, which

\* The feet are confined by a chain or rope attached at each end to a staff, which is turned round to tighten it. This is called a *fel'ekch*. Two persons (one on each side) strike alternately.



led to her detection by one of her former friends in a bath. She was mounted upon a high-saddled ass, such as ladies in Egypt usually ride, and very respectably dressed, attended by soldiers, and surrounded by a rabble, who, instead of commiserating, uttered loud imprecations against her. The Cka'dee, who passed sentence upon her, exhorted her, in vain, to return to her former faith. Her own father was her accuser ! She was taken in a boat into the midst of the river, stripped nearly naked, strangled, and then thrown into the stream\*. The Europeans residing in Cairo regretted that the Ba'sha was then at Alexandria, as they might have prevailed upon him to pardon her. Once before they interceded with him for a woman who had been condemned for apostasy. The Ba'sha ordered that she should be brought before him : he exhorted her to recant ; but, finding her resolute, reproved her for her *folly*, and sent her home, commanding that no injury should be done to her.

A few words may here be added respecting the sect of the *Wah'ha'bees*, which was founded, less than a century ago, by Mohham'mad Ibn 'Abd El-Wah'ha'b, a pious and learned sheykh of the province of Nejd, in central Arabia. About the middle of the last century, he had the good fortune to convert to his creed a powerful chief of Ed-Dir'ee'yeh, the capital of the Nejd. This chief, Mohham'mad Ib'n So'ooti, became the sovereign of the new sect—their religious and political head—and under him and his successors the Wah'ha'bee doctrines were spread throughout the greater part of Arabia. He was

\* The conduct of the lower orders in Cairo on this occasion speaks sadly against their character. A *song* was composed on the victim of this terrible law, and became very popular in the metropolis.



first succeeded by his son, 'Abd El-'Azee'z ; next, by So'oo'd, the son of the latter, and the greatest of the Wah'ha'bee leaders ; and, lastly, by 'Abd Al'lah, the son of this So'oo'd, who, after an arduous warfare with the armies of Mohham'mad 'Al'ee, surrendered himself to his victorious enemies, was sent to Egypt, thence to Constantinople, and there beheaded. The wars which Mohham'mad 'Al'ee carried on against the Wah'ha'bees had for their chief object the destruction of the political power of the new sect : their religious tenets are still professed by many of the Arabs, and allowed to be orthodox by the most learned of the 'Ool'ama of Egypt. The Wah'ha'bees are merely reformers, who believe all the fundamental points of El-Isla'm, and all the accessory doctrines of the Ckoor-a'n and the Traditions of the Prophet : in short, their tenets are those of the primitive Moos'lims. They disapprove of gorgeous sepulchres, and domes erected over tombs : such they invariably destroy when in their power. They also condemn, as idolaters, those who pay peculiar veneration to deceased saints ; and even declare all other Moos'lims to be heretics, for the extravagant respect which they pay to the Prophet. They forbid the wearing of silk, and gold ornaments, and all costly apparel ; and also the practice of smoking tobacco. For the want of this last luxury, they console themselves in some degree by an immoderate use of coffee\*. There are many learned men among them, and they have collected many valuable books (chiefly historical) from various parts of Arabia, and from Egypt.

\* Among many other erroneous statements respecting the Wah'ha'bees it has been asserted that they prohibit the drinking of coffee.



## CHAPTER IV.

## GOVERNMENT.

EGYPT has, of late years, experienced great political changes, and nearly ceased to be a province of the Turkish Empire. Its present *Ba'sha* (Mohham'mad 'Al'ee), having exterminated the Ghoozz, or Memloo'ks, who shared the government with his predecessors, has rendered himself an almost independent prince. He, however, professes allegiance to the Soolta'n, and remits the tribute, according to former custom, to Constantinople: he is, moreover, under an obligation to respect the fundamental laws of the Ckoor-a'n and the Traditions; but he exercises a dominion otherwise unlimited. He may cause any one of his subjects to be put to death without the formality of a trial, or without assigning any cause: a simple horizontal motion of his hand is sufficient to imply the sentence of decapitation. But I must not be understood to insinuate that he is prone to shed blood without any reason: severity is a characteristic of this prince, rather than wanton cruelty; and boundless ambition has prompted him to almost every action by which he has attracted either praise or censure\*.

\* The government of Egypt, from the period of the conquest of this country by the Arabs, has been nearly the same as at present in its influence upon the manners and customs and character of the inhabitants; and I therefore do not deem an historical retrospect necessary to the illustration of this work. It



In the Citadel of the Metropolis is a court of judicature, called *Deewa'n el-Khidee'wee*, where, in the Ba'sha's absence, presides his *Kikk'ya*\*, or deputy, Hhabe'e'b Efen'dee. In cases which do not fall within the province of the Cka'dee, or which are sufficiently clear to be decided without referring them to the court of that officer, or to another council, the president of the *Deewa'n el-Khidee'wee* passes judgment. Numerous guard-houses have been established throughout the metropolis, at each of which is stationed a body of Niza'm, or regular troops. The guard is called *Ckool'loock* †, or, more commonly, at present, *Ckar'a-cko'lt*‡. Persons accused of thefts, assaults, &c., in Cairo, are given in charge to a soldier of the guard, who takes them to the chief guard-house, in the Moo'skee, a street in that part of the town in which most of the Franks reside. The charges being here stated, and committed to writing, he conducts them to the *Za'bit*, or chief magistrate of the police of the metropolis. The *Za'bit*, having heard the case, sends the accused for trial to the *Deewa'n el-Khidee'wee* §.

should, however, be mentioned, that the people of Egypt are not now allowed to indulge in that excessive fanatical rudeness with which they formerly treated unbelievers. Restraint may, at first, increase, but will probably, in the course of time, materially diminish, the feeling of fanatical intolerance.

\* Thus pronounced in Egypt, but more properly *Kya'hhyā*, or *Kel'khood'a*.

† From the Turkish *Ckool'l-loock*.

‡ Vulgarly, *Karako'n*.

§ A very arbitrary power is often exercised in this and similar courts, and the proceedings are conducted with little decorum. Many Turkish officers, even of the highest rank, make use of language far too disgusting for me to mention towards persons brought before them for judgment, and towards those who appeal to them for justice.



When a person denies the offence with which he is charged, and there is not sufficient evidence to convict him, but some ground of suspicion, he is generally bastinadoed, in order to induce him to confess; and then, if not before, when the crime is not of a nature that renders him obnoxious to a very heavy punishment, he, if guilty, admits it. A thief, after this discipline, generally confesses, "The devil seduced me, and I took it." The punishment of the convicts is regulated by a system of arbitrary, but lenient and wise, policy: it usually consists in their being compelled to labour, for a scanty sustenance, in some of the public works; such as the removal of rubbish, digging canals, &c.; and sometimes the army is recruited with able-bodied young men convicted of petty offences. In employing malefactors in labours for the improvement of the country, Mo-hham'mad 'Al'ee merits the praises bestowed upon Sabacon, the Ethiopian conqueror and king of Egypt, who is said to have introduced this policy. The Ba'sha is, however, very severe in punishing thefts, &c., committed against himself:—death is the usual penalty in such cases.

There are several inferior councils for conducting the affairs of different departments of the administration. The principal of these are the following: 1. The *Meg'lis el-Mesh'war'ah* (the Council of Deliberation); also called *Meg'lis el-Mesh'war'ah el-Mel'keec'yeh* (the Council of Deliberation on the affairs of the State), to distinguish it from other councils. The members of this and of the other similar councils are chosen by the Ba'sha, for their talents or other qualifications; and consequently his will and interest sway them in all their decisions. They are his instruments, and compose a committee for presiding



over the general government of the country, and the commercial and agricultural affairs of the Ba'sha. Petitions, &c., addressed to the Ba'sha, or to his Deewa'n, relating to private interests or the affairs of the government, are generally submitted to their consideration and judgment, unless they more properly come under the cognizance of other councils hereafter to be mentioned.

2. The *Meg'lis el-Gih'a'dee'yeh* (the Council of the Army); also called *Meg'lis el-Mesh'war'ah el-'Askaree'yeh* (the Council of Deliberation on Military Affairs).

The province of this court is sufficiently shown by its name. 3. The Council of the *Turskha'neh*, or Navy.

4. The *Deewa'n el-Toogga'r* (or Court of the Merchants). This court, the members of which are merchants of various countries and religions, presided over by the *Sha'h-ben'dar* (or chief of the merchants of Cairo), was instituted in consequence of the laws of the Ckoor-a'n and the *Soon'neh* being found not sufficiently explicit in some cases arising out of modern commercial transactions.

The *Cka'dee* (or chief judge) of Cairo presides in Egypt only a year, at the expiration of which term, a new *Cka'dee* having arrived from Constantinople, the former returns. It was customary for this officer to proceed from Cairo, with the great caravan of pilgrims, to Mek'keh, perform the ceremonies of the pilgrimage, and remain one year as *Cka'dee* of the holy city, and one year at El-Medee'neh\*. He purchases his place privately of the government, which pays no particular regard to his qualifications; though he must be a man

\* He used to arrive in Cairo in the beginning of Rum'ada'n; but the beginning of the first month, Mohhar'ram, has of late been fixed upon instead of the former period.



of some knowledge, an 'Osma'nlee (that is, a Turk), and of the sect of the Hhan'afees. His tribunal is called the *Mahh'kem'eh*, or Place of Judgment. Few Cka'dees are very well acquainted with the Arabic language; nor is it necessary for them to have such knowledge. In Cairo, the Cka'dee has little or nothing to do but to confirm the sentence of his *Na'ib* (or deputy), who hears and decides the more ordinary cases, and whom he chooses from among the 'Ool'ama of Istamboo'l, or the decision of the *Moof'tee* (or chief doctor of the law) of his own sect, who constantly resides in Cairo, and gives judgment in all cases of difficulty; but in general the *Na'ib* is, at the best, but little conversant with the popular dialect of Egypt; therefore, in Cairo, where the chief proportion of the litigants at the *Mahh'kem'eh* are Arabs, the judge must place the utmost confidence in the *Ba'sh Toorgooma'n* (or Chief Interpreter), whose place is permanent, and who is consequently well acquainted with all the customs of the court, particularly with the system of bribery; and this knowledge he is generally very ready to communicate to every new Cka'dee and *Na'ib*. A man may be grossly ignorant of the law, and yet hold the office of Cka'dee of Cairo: several instances of this kind have occurred: but the *Na'ib* must be a lawyer of learning and experience.

When a person has a suit to prefer at the *Mahh'kem'eh* against another individual or party, he goes thither, and applies to the *Ba'sh Roos'ool* (or chief of the sergeants who execute arrests) for a *Rasoo'l* to arrest the accused. The *Rasoo'l* receives a piaster or two\*,

\* The Egyptian piaster is now equivalent to the fifth part of a shilling, or  $2\frac{3}{4}d$ .



and generally gives half of this fee privately to his chief. The plaintiff and defendant then present themselves in the great hall of the Mahh'kem'eh; which is a large saloon, facing a spacious court, and having an open front, formed by a row of columns and arches. Here are seated several officers called *Sha'hids*, whose business is to write the statements of the cases to be submitted to judgment, and who are under the authority of the *Ba'sh Ka'tib* (or Chief Secretary). The plaintiff, addressing any one of the *Sha'hids* whom he finds unoccupied, states his case, and the *Sha'hid* commits it to writing, and receives a fee of a piaster or more; after which, if the case be of a trifling nature, and the defendant acknowledge the justice of the suit, he (the *Sha'hid*) passes sentence; but otherwise he conducts the two parties before the *Na'ib*, who holds his court in an inner apartment. The *Na'ib*, having heard the case, desires the plaintiff to procure a *fel'wa* (or judicial decision) from the *Moof'tee* of the sect of the *Hhan'afees*, who receives a fee, seldom less than ten piasters, and often more than a hundred, or two hundred. This is the course pursued in all cases but those of a very trifling nature, which are settled with less trouble, and those of great importance or intricacy. A case of the latter kind is tried in the private apartment of the *Cka'dee*, before the *Cka'dee* himself, the *Na'ib*, and the *Moof'tee* of the *Hhan'afees*, who is summoned to hear it, and to give his decision; and sometimes, in cases of very great difficulty or moment, several of the *'Ool'ama* of Cairo are, in like manner, summoned. The *Moof'tee* hears the case, and writes his sentence; and the *Cka'dee* confirms his judgment, and stamps the paper with his seal, which is all that he has to do in any case. The



accused may clear himself by his oath, when the plaintiff has not witnesses to produce: placing his right hand on a copy of the Ckoor-a'n, which is held out to him, he says "By God, the Great!" three times; adding "By what is contained in this of the word of God!" The witnesses must be men of good repute, or asserted to be such, and not interested in the cause: in every case, at least two witnesses are requisite \* (or one man and two women); and each of these must be attested to be a person of probity by two others. An infidel cannot bear witness against a Moos'lim in a case involving capital or other heavy punishment, and evidence in favour of a son or grandson, or of a father or grandfather, is not received; nor is the testimony of slaves; neither can a master testify in favour of his slave.

The fees, until lately, used to be paid by the successful party; but now they are paid by the other party. The Cka'dee's fees for decisions in cases respecting the sale of property are two per cent. on the amount of the property: in cases of legacies, four per cent., excepting when the heir is an orphan not of age, who pays only two per cent.: for decisions respecting property in houses or land, when the cost of the property in question is known, his fees are two per cent.; but, when the cost is not known, one year's rent. These are the legitimate fees; but more than the due amount is often exacted. In cases which do not concern property, the Cka'dee's Na'ib fixes the amount of the fees. There are also other fees than those of the Cka'dee to be paid

\* This law is borrowed from the Jews. See Deut. xix., 15. A man may refuse to give his testimony.



after the decision of the case : for instance, if the Cka'dee's fees be two or three hundred piasters, a fee of about two piasters must be paid to the Ba'sh Toorgooma'n ; about the same to the Ba'sh Roos'ool ; and one piaster to the Rasoo'l, or to each Rasoo'l employed.

The rank of a plaintiff or defendant, or a bribe from either, often influences the decision of the judge. In general the Na'ib and Moof'tee take bribes, and the Cka'dee receives from his Na'ib. On some occasions, particularly in long litigations, bribes are given by each party, and the decision is awarded in favour of him who pays highest. This frequently happens in difficult lawsuits ; and, even in cases respecting which the law is perfectly clear, strict justice is not always administered ; bribes and false testimony being employed by one of the parties. The shocking extent to which the practices of bribery and suborning false witnesses are carried in Moos'lim courts of law, and among them in the tribunal of the Cka'dee of Cairo, may be scarcely credited on the bare assertion of the fact : some strong proof, resting on indubitable authority, may be demanded ; and here I shall give such proof, in a summary of a case which was tried not long since, and which was related to me by the Secretary and Ima'm of the Sheykh El-Mah'dee, who was then supreme Moof'tee of Cairo (being the chief Moof'tee of the Hhan'afees), and to whom this case was referred after judgment in the Cka'dee's court.

A Turkish merchant, residing in Cairo, died, leaving property to the amount of six thousand purses \*, and

\* A purse is the sum of five hundred piasters, and was then equivalent to nearly seven pounds sterling ; but is now equal to only five pounds.



no relation to inherit but one daughter. The Seyd Mohham'mad El-Mahhroo'ckee, the Sha'h-ben'dar (chief of the merchants of Cairo), hearing of this event, suborned a common fel'la'hh, who was the bow'wa'b (or door-keeper) of a respected sheykh, and whose parents (both of them Arabs) were known to many persons, to assert himself a son of a brother of the deceased. The case was brought before the Cka'dec, and, as it was one of considerable importance, several of the principal 'Ool'ama of the city were summoned to decide it. They were all bribed or influenced by El-Mahhroo'ckee, as will presently be shown; false witnesses were brought forward to swear to the truth of the bow'wa'b's pretensions, and others to give testimony to the good character of these witnesses. Three thousand purses were adjudged to the daughter of the deceased, and the other half of the property to the bow'wa'b. El-Mahhroo'ckee received the share of the latter, deducting only three hundred piasters, which he presented to the bow'wa'b. The chief Moof'tee, El-Mah'dee, was absent from Cairo when the case was tried. On his return to the metropolis, a few days after, the daughter of the deceased merchant repaired to his house, stated her case to him, and earnestly solicited redress. The Moof'tee, though convinced of the injustice which she had suffered, and not doubting the truth of what she related respecting the part which El-Mahhroo'ckee had taken in this affair, told her that he feared it was impossible for him to annul the judgment unless there were some irregularity in the proceedings of the court, but that he would look at the record of the case in the register of the Mahh'-kem'eh. Having done this, he betook himself to the Ba'sha, with whom he was in great favour for his



knowledge and inflexible integrity, and complained to him that the tribunal of the Cka'dee was disgraced by the administration of the most flagrant injustice ; that false witness was admitted by the 'Ool'ama, however evident and glaring it might be ; and that a judgment which they had given in a late case, during his absence, was the general talk and wonder of the town. The Ba'sha summoned the Cka'dee, and all the 'Ool'ama who had tried this case, to meet the Moof'tee in the Citadel ; and, when they had assembled there, addressed them, as from himself, with the Moof'tee's complaint. The Cka'dee, appearing, like the 'Ool'ama, highly indignant at this charge, demanded to know upon what it was grounded. The Ba'sha replied that it was a general charge, but particularly grounded upon the case in which the court had admitted the claim of a bow'wa'b to a relationship and inheritance which they could not believe to be his right. The Cka'dee here urged that he had passed sentence in accordance with the unanimous decision of the 'Ool'ama then present. "Let the record of the case be read," said the Ba'sha. The journal being sent for, this was done ; and when the secretary had finished reading the minutes, the Cka'dee, in a loud tone of proud authority, said, "And I judged so." The Moof'tee, in a louder and more authoritative tone, exclaimed, "And thy judgment is false !" All eyes were fixed in astonishment, now at the Moof'tee, now at the Ba'sha, now at the other 'Ool'ama. The Cka'dee and the 'Ool'ama rolled their heads and stroked their beards. The former exclaimed, tapping his breast, "I, the Cka'dee of Musr, pass a false sentence !" "And we," said the 'Ool'ama, "we, Sheykh Mah'dee ! we, 'Ool'ama el-Isla'm, give a false decision !" "O Sheykh



Mah'dee," said El-Mahhroo'ckee (who, from his commercial transactions with the Ba'sha, could generally obtain a place in his councils), "respect the 'Ool'ama, as they respect thee!" "O Mahhroo'ckee!" exclaimed the Moof'tee, "art thou concerned in this affair? Declare what part thou hast in it, or else hold thy peace: go, speak in the assemblies of the merchants, but presume not again to open thy mouth in the council of the 'Ool'ama!" El-Mahhroo'ckee immediately left the palace, for he saw how the affair would terminate, and had to make his arrangements accordingly. The Moof'tee was now desired, by the other 'Ool'ama, to adduce a proof of the invalidity of their decision. Drawing from his bosom a small book on the laws of inheritance, he read from it, "To establish a claim to relationship and inheritance, the names of the father and mother of the claimant, and those of his father's father and mother, and of his mother's father and mother, must be ascertained." The names of the father and mother of the pretended father of the bow'wa'b, the false witnesses had not been prepared to give; and this deficiency in the testimony (which the 'Ool'ama, in trying the case, purposely overlooked) now caused the sentence to be annulled. The bow'wa'b was brought before the council, and, denying the imposition of which he had been made the principal instrument, was, by order of the Ba'sha, very severely bastinadoed; but the only confession that could be drawn from him by the torture which he endured was, that he had received nothing more of the three thousand purses than three hundred piasters. Meanwhile, El-Mahhroo'ckee had repaired to the bow'wa'b's master: he told the latter what had happened at the Citadel, and what he had foreseen would be the



result, put into his hand three thousand purses, and begged him immediately to go to the council, give this sum of money, and say that it had been placed in his hands in trust by his servant. This was done, and the money was paid to the daughter of the deceased.

In another case, when the Cka'dee and the council of the 'Ool'ama were influenced in their decision by a Ba'sha (not Mohham'mad 'Al'ee), and passed a sentence contrary to law, they were thwarted in the same manner by El-Mah'dee. This Moof'tee was a rare example of integrity. It is said that he never took a fee for a fet'wa. He died shortly after my first visit to this country. I could mention several other glaring cases of bribery in the court of the Cka'dee of Cairo; but the above is sufficient.

There are five minor Mahh'kem'ehs in Cairo; and likewise one at its principal port, Boo'la'ck; and one at its southern port, Musr El-'Atee'ckah. A Sha'hid from the great Mahh'kem'eh presides at each of them, as deputy of the chief Cka'dee, who confirms their acts. The matters submitted to these minor tribunals are chiefly respecting the sales of property, and legacies, marriages, and divorces; for the Cka'dee marries female orphans under age who have no relations of age to act as their guardians; and wives often have recourse to law to compel their husbands to divorce them. In every country-town there is also a Cka'dee, generally a native of the place, and never a Turk, who decides all cases, sometimes from his own knowledge of the law, but commonly on the authority of a Moof'tee. One Cka'dee generally serves for two or three or more villages.

Each of the four orthodox sects of Moos'lims (the Hhan'afees, Sha'fe'ees, Ma'likees, and Hham'bel'ees)



has its *Sheykh*, or religious chief, who is chosen from among the most learned of the body, and resides in the metropolis. The *Sheykh* of the great mosque El-Az'har (who is always of the sect of the *Sha'fe'ees*, and sometimes *Sheykh* of that sect), together with the other *Sheykhs* above mentioned, and the *Cka'dee*, the *Nackee'b el-Ashra'f* (the chief of the *Sheree'fs*, or descendants of the Prophet), and several other persons, constitute the council of the '*Ool'ama*\* (or learned men), by whom the Turkish *Ba'shas* and *Memloo'k* chiefs have often been kept in awe, and by whom their tyranny has frequently been restricted : but now this learned body has lost almost all its influence over the government. Petty disputes are often, by mutual consent of the parties at variance, submitted to the judgment of one of the four *Sheykhs* first mentioned, as they are the chief *Moof'tees* of their respective sects ; and the utmost deference is always paid to them. Difficult and delicate causes, which concern the laws of the *Ckoor-a'n* or the Traditions, are also frequently referred by the *Ba'sha* to these *Sheykhs* ; but their opinion is not always followed by him : for instance, after consulting them respecting the legality of dissecting human bodies, for the sake of acquiring anatomical knowledge, and receiving their declaration that it was repugnant to the laws of the religion, he, nevertheless, has caused it to be practised by *Moos'lim* students of anatomy.

The police of the metropolis is more under the direction of the military than of the civil power. A few years ago it was under the authority of the *Wa'lee* and the

\* In the singular, '*A'lm*. This title is more particularly given to a professor of jurisprudence. European writers generally use the plural form of this appellation for the singular.



*Za'bit*; but since my first visit to this country the office of the former has been abolished. He was charged with the apprehension of thieves and other criminals; and under his jurisdiction were the public women, of whom he kept a list, and from each of whom he exacted a tax. He also took cognizance of the conduct of the women in general; and, when he found a female to have been guilty of a single act of incontinence, he added her name to the list of the public women, and demanded from her the tax, unless she preferred, or could afford, to escape that ignominy, by giving to him, or to his officers, a considerable bribe. This course was always pursued, and is still, by a person who farms the tax of the public women\*, in the case of unmarried females, and generally in the case of the married also; but the latter are sometimes privately put to death, if they cannot, by bribery or some other artifice, save themselves. Such proceedings are, however, in two points, contrary to the law, which ordains that a person who accuses a woman of adultery or fornication, without producing four witnesses of the crime, shall be scourged with eighty stripes, and decrees other punishments than those of degradation and tribute against women convicted of such offences.

The office of the *Za'bit* has before been mentioned. He is now the chief of the police. His officers, who have no distinguishing mark to render them known as such, are interspersed through the metropolis: they often visit the coffee-shops, and observe the conduct, and listen to the conversation, of the citizens. Many of them are pardoned thieves. They accompany the mili-

\* Since this was written, the public women throughout Egypt have been compelled to relinquish their licentious profession.



tary guards in their nightly rounds through the streets of the metropolis. Here, none but the blind are allowed to go out at night later than about an hour and a half after sunset, without a lantern or a light of some kind. Few persons are seen in the streets later than two or three hours after sunset. At the fifth or sixth hour, one might pass through the whole length of the metropolis and scarcely meet more than a dozen or twenty persons, excepting the watchmen and guards, and the porters at the gates of the by-streets and quarters. The sentinel, or guard, calls out to the approaching passenger, in Turkish, "Who is that \*?" and is answered, in Arabic, "A citizen†." The private watchman, in the same case, exclaims, "Attest the unity of God‡!" or merely, "Attest the unity §!" The answer given to this is, "There is no deity but God||!" which Christians, as well as Moos'lims, object not to say; the former understanding these words in a different sense from the latter. It is supposed that a thief, or a person bound on any unlawful undertaking, would not dare to utter these words. Some persons loudly exclaim, in reply to the summons of the watchman, "There is no deity but God: Mohham'mad is God's Apostle."

The Za'bit, or A'gha of the police, used frequently to go about the metropolis by night, often accompanied only by the executioner and the *she'alegee*, or bearer of a kind of torch called *she'aleh*, which is still in use.

\* *Kec'men door' o'*, for *kee'm door' o'*.

† *Il'n bel'ed*. If blind, he answers *A'ama*.

‡ *Wahh'hhd Alla'h*.

§ *Wahh'hhd*; or, to more than one person, *Wahh'hhdoo*.

|| *La' ila'ha il'la-lla'h*.



This torch burns, soon after it is lighted, without a flame, excepting when it is waved through the air, when it suddenly blazes forth : it therefore answers the same purpose as our dark lantern. The burning end is sometimes concealed in a small pot or jar, or covered with something else, when not required to give light ; but it is said that thieves often smell it in time to escape meeting the bearer. When a person without a light is met by the police at night, he seldom attempts resistance or flight ; the punishment to which he is liable is beating. The chief of the police had an arbitrary power to put any criminal or offender to death, without trial, and when not obnoxious, by law, to capital punishment ; and so also had many inferior officers, as will be seen in subsequent pages of this work : but within the last two or three years, instances of the exercise of such power have been very rare, and I believe they would not now be permitted. The officers of the *Za'bit* perform their nightly rounds with the military guards merely as being better acquainted than the latter with the haunts and practices of thieves and other bad characters ; and the *Za'bit* himself scarcely ever exercises any penal authority beyond that of beating or flogging.

Very curious measures, such as we read of in some of the "*Tales of a Thousand and One Nights*," were often adopted by the police magistrates of Cairo, to discover an offender, before the late innovations. I may mention an instance. The authenticity of the following case, and of several others of a similar nature, is well known. I shall relate it in the manner in which I have heard it told. A poor man applied one day to the *A'gha* of the police, and said, "Sir, there came to me, to-day, a



woman, and she said to me, ‘Take this *ckoors*\*, and let it remain in your possession for a time, and lend me five hundred piasters:’ and I took it from her, Sir, and gave her the five hundred piasters, and she went away: and when she was gone away, I said to myself, ‘Let me look at this *ckoors*;’ and I looked at it, and behold, it was yellow brass: and I slapped my face, and said, ‘I will go to the A’gha, and relate my story to him; perhaps he will investigate the affair, and clear it up;’ for there is none that can help me in this matter but thee.” The A’gha said to him, “Hear what I tell thee, man. Take whatever is in thy shop; leave nothing; and lock it up; and to-morrow morning go early; and when thou hast opened the shop, cry out, ‘Alas for my property!’ then take in thy hands two clods, and beat thyself with them, and cry, ‘Alas for the property of others!’ and whoever says to thee, ‘What is the matter with thee?’ do thou answer, ‘The property of others is lost: a pledge that I had, belonging to a woman, is lost; if it were my own, I should not thus lament it;’ and this will clear up the affair.” The man promised to do as he was desired. He removed everything from his shop, and early the next morning he went and opened it, and began to cry out, “Alas for the property of others!” and he took two clods, and beat himself with them, and went about every district of the city, crying, “Alas for the property of others! a pledge that I had, belonging to a woman, is lost; if it were my own, I should not thus lament it.” The woman who had given him the *ckoors* in pledge heard of this, and discovered that it was the man whom she had cheated; so she said to herself, “Go

\* An ornament worn on the crown of the head-dress by women, described in the Appendix to this work.



and bring an action against him." She went to his shop, riding on an ass, to give herself consequence, and said to him, "Man, give me my property that is in thy possession." He answered, "It is lost." "Thy tongue be cut out!" she cried: "dost thou lose my property? By A'l'lah! I will go to the A'gha, and inform him of it." "Go," said he; and she went, and told her case. The A'gha sent for the man; and when he had come, said to his accuser, "What is thy property in his possession?" She answered, "A ckoors of red Venetian gold." "Woman," said the A'gha, "I have a gold ckoors here: I should like to show it thee." She said, "Show it me, Sir, for I shall know my ckoors." The A'gha then untied a handkerchief, and, taking out of it the ckoors which she had given in pledge, said "Look." She looked at it and knew it, and hung down her head. The A'gha said, "Raise thy head, and say where are the five hundred piasters of this man." She answered, "Sir, they are in my house." The executioner was sent with her to her house, but without his sword; and the woman, having gone into the house, brought out a purse containing the money, and went back with him. The money was given to the man from whom it had been obtained, and the executioner was then ordered to take the woman to the Roomey'leh (a large open place below the Citadel), and there to behead her, which he did.

The markets of Cairo, and the weights and measures, are under the inspection of an officer called the *Mohh'tes'ib*. He occasionally rides about the town, preceded by an officer who carries a large pair of scales, and followed by the executioners and numerous other servants. Passing by shops, or through the markets, he orders each shopkeeper, one after another, or sometimes only one here and there,



to produce his scales, weights, and measures, and tries whether they be correct. He also inquires the prices of provisions at the shops where such articles are sold. Often, too, he stops a servant, or other passenger, in the street, whom he may chance to meet carrying any article of food that he has just bought, and asks him for what sum, or at what weight, he purchased it. When he finds that a shopkeeper has incorrect scales, weights, or measures, or that he has sold a thing deficient in weight, or above the regular market-price, he punishes him on the spot. The general punishment is beating or flogging. Once I saw a man tormented in a different way, for selling bread deficient in weight. A hole was bored through his nose, and a cake of bread, about a span wide and a finger's breadth in thickness, was suspended to it by a piece of string. He was stripped naked, with the exception of having a piece of linen about his loins, and tied, with his arms bound behind him, to the bars of a window of a mosque called the Ashrafee'yeh, in the principal street of the metropolis, his feet resting upon the sill. He remained thus about three hours, exposed to the gaze of the multitude which thronged the street, and to the scorching rays of the sun.

A person who was appointed Mohh'tes'ib shortly after my former visit to this country (Moos'tuf'a Ka'shif, a Koord) exercised his power in a most brutal manner, clipping men's ears (that is, cutting off the lobe, or ear-lap), not only for the most trifling transgression, but often for no offence whatever. He once met an old man driving along several asses laden with water-melons, and, pointing to one of the largest of these fruits, asked its price. The old man put his finger and thumb to his ear-lap, and said, "Cut it, Sir." He was asked again



and again, and gave the same answer. The Mohh'tes'ib, angry, but unable to refrain from laughing, said, "Fellow, are you mad or deaf?" "No," replied the old man, "I am neither mad nor deaf; but I know that, if I were to say the price of the melon is ten fud'dahs, you would say 'Clip his ear;' and if I said *five* fud'dahs, or *one* fud'dah, you would say 'Clip his ear:' therefore clip it at once, and let me pass on." His humour saved him. Clipping ears was the usual punishment inflicted by this Mohh'tes'ib; but sometimes he tortured in a different manner. A butcher, who had sold some meat wanting two ounces of its due weight, he punished by cutting off two ounces of flesh from his back. A seller of *koona'feh* (a kind of paste resembling vermicelli) having made his customers pay a trifle more than was just, he caused him to be stripped, and seated upon the round copper tray on which the *koona'feh* was baked, and kept so until he was dreadfully burnt. He generally punished dishonest butchers by putting a hook through their nose, and hanging a piece of meat to it. Meeting, one day, a man carrying a large crate full of earthen water-bottles from Semennoo'd, which he offered for sale as made at Ckin'ë, he caused his attendants to break each bottle separately against the vender's head. Moos'tuf'a Ka'shif also exercised his tyranny in other cases than those which properly fell under his jurisdiction. He once took a fancy to send one of his horses to a bath, and desired the keeper of a bath in his neighbourhood to prepare for receiving it, and to wash it well, and make its coat very smooth. The bath-keeper, annoyed at so extraordinary a command, ventured to suggest that, as the pavements of the bath were of marble, the horse might slip, and fall; and also, that it might take cold on going



out ; and that it would, therefore, be better for him to convey to the stable the contents of the cistern o the bath in buckets, and there to perform the operation. Moos'tuf'a Ka'shuf said, " I see how it is ; you do not like that my horse should go into your bath." He desired some of his servants to throw him down, and beat him with staves until he should tell them to stop. They did so ; and beat the poor man till he died.

A few years ago there used to be carried before the Mohh'tes'ib, when going his rounds to examine the weights and measures, &c., a pair of scales larger than that used at present. Its beam, it is said, was a hollow tube, containing some quicksilver ; by means of which, the bearer, knowing those persons who had bribed his master, and those who had not, easily made either scale preponderate.

As the Mohh'tes'ib is the overseer of the public markets, so there are officers who have a similar charge in superintending each branch of the Ba'sha's trade and manufactures ; and some of these persons have been allowed to perpetrate most abominable acts of tyranny and cruelty. One of this class, who was named 'Al'ee Bey, *Na'zir el-C'kooma'sh* (or Overseer of the Linen), when he found a person in possession of a private loom, or selling the produce of such a loom, generally bound him up in a piece of his linen, soaked in oil and tar ; then suspended him, thus enveloped, to a branch of a tree, and set light to the wrapper. After having destroyed a number of men in this horrible manner, he was himself, among many others, burnt to death, by the explosion of a powder-magazine on the northern slope of the Citadel of Cairo, in 1824, the year before my first arrival in Egypt. A friend of mine, who spoke to



me of the atrocities of this monster, added, "When his corpse was taken to be buried, the Sheykh El-'Aroo'-see (who was Sheykh of the great mosque El-Az'har) recited the funeral prayers over it, in the mosque of the Hhas'aney'n; and I acted as *moobal'ligh* (to repeat the words of the Ima'm): when the Sheykh uttered the words, 'Give your testimony respecting him,' and when I had repeated them, no one of all the persons present, and they were many, presumed to give the answer, 'He was of the virtuous:' all were silent: to make the circumstance more glaring, I said again, 'Give your testimony respecting him:' but not an answer was heard; and the Sheykh, in confusion, said, but in a very low voice, 'May God have mercy upon him.' Now we may certainly say of this cursed man," continued my friend, "that he is gone to hell: yet his wife is constantly having *khut'mehs* (recitals of the Ckoor-a'n) performed in her house for him; and lights two wax candles, for his sake, every evening, at the niche of the mosque of the Hhas'aney'n."

Every quarter in the metropolis has its sheykh, called *Sheykh el-Iha'rah*, whose influence is exerted to maintain order, to settle any trifling disputes among the inhabitants, and to expel those who disturb the peace of their neighbours. The whole of the metropolis is also divided into eight districts, over each of which is a sheykh, called *Sheykh el-Toomn*.

The members of various trades and manufactures in the metropolis and other large towns have also their respective sheykh, to whom all disputes respecting matters connected with those trades or crafts are submitted for arbitration; and whose sanction is required for the admission of new members.



The servants in the metropolis are likewise under the authority of particular sheykhs. Any person in want of a servant may procure one by applying to one of these officers, who, for a small fee (two or three piasters), becomes responsible for the conduct of the man whom he recommends. Should a servant so engaged rob his master, the latter gives information to the Sheykh, who, whether he can recover the stolen property or not, must indemnify the master.

Even the common thieves used, not many years since, to respect a superior, who was called their sheykh. He was often required to search for stolen goods, and to bring offenders to justice ; which he generally accomplished. It is very remarkable that the same strange system prevailed among the ancient Egyptians\*.

The Coptic Patriarch, who is the head of his church, judges petty causes among his people in the metropolis ; and the inferior clergy do the same in other places ; but an appeal may be made to the Cka'dee. A Moos'lim aggrieved by a Copt may demand justice from the Patriarch or the Cka'dee : a Copt who seeks redress from a Moos'lim must apply to the Cka'dee. The Jews are similarly circumstanced. The Franks, or Europeans in general, are not answerable to any other authority than that of their respective consuls, excepting when they are aggressors against a Moos'lim : they are then surrendered to the Turkish authorities, who, on the other hand, will render justice to the Frank who is aggrieved by a Moos'lim.

The inhabitants of the country-towns and villages are under the government of Turkish officers and of

\* See Diodorus Siculus, lib. i., cap. 80.



their own countrymen. The whole of Egypt is divided into several large provinces, each of which is governed by an 'Osma'nlee (or a Turk); and these provinces are subdivided into districts, which are governed by native officers, with the titles of *Ma-moo'r* and *Na'zir*. Every village, as well as town, has also its Sheykh, called *Sheykh el-Bel'ed*; who is one of the native Moos'lim inhabitants. All the officers above mentioned, excepting the last, were formerly Turks; and there were other Turkish governors of small districts, who were called *Ka'shufs*, and *Cka'im-macka'ns*: the change was made very shortly before my present visit to this country; and the Fella'hhee'n complain that their condition is worse than it was before; but it is generally from the tyranny of their great Turkish governors that they suffer most severely.

The following case will convey some idea of the condition of Egyptian peasants in some provinces. A Turk\*, infamous for many barbarous acts, presiding at the town of Tun'ta, in the Delta, went one night to the government granary of that town, and finding two peasants sleeping there, asked them who they were, and what was their business in that place. One of them said that he had brought 130 ardeb'bs of corn from a village of the district; and the other, that he had brought 60 ardeb'bs from the land belonging to the town. "You rascal!" said the governor to the latter; "this man brings 130 ardeb'bs from the lands of a small village; and you, but 60 from the lands of the town." "This man," answered the peasant of Tun'ta, "brings

\* Sooleyman A'gha, the Silahda'r: he has died since this was written.



corn but once a week ; and I am now bringing it every day." "Be-silent !" said the governor ; and, pointing to a neighbouring tree, ordered one of the servants of the granary to hang the peasant to one of its branches. The order was obeyed, and the governor returned to his house. The next morning he went again to the granary, and saw a man bringing in a large quantity of corn. He asked who he was, and what quantity he had brought ; and was answered, by the hangman of the preceding night, "This is the man, Sir, whom I hanged by your orders, last night ; and he has brought 160 ardeb'ls." "What !" exclaimed the governor : "has he risen from the dead ?" He was answered "No, Sir : I hanged him so that his toes touched the ground ; and when you were gone, I untied the rope : you did not order me to *kill* him." The Turk muttered, "Aha ! hanging and killing are different things : Arabic is copious : next time I will say kill. Take care of Ab'oo Da'-oo'd\*." This is his nick-name.

Another occurrence may here be aptly related, as a further illustration of the nature of the government to which the people of Egypt are subjected. A fella'hh, who was appointed Na'zir (or governor) of the district of El-Men'oo'fee'yeh (the southernmost district of the Delta), a short time before my present visit to Egypt, in collecting the taxes at a village, demanded, of a poor peasant, the sum of sixty riya'ls (ninety fud'dahs each, making a sum total of a hundred and thirty-five piasters, which was then equivalent to about thirty shillings). The poor man urged that he possessed nothing but a

\* Ab'oo Da'-oo'd, Ab'oo 'Al'ee, &c., are patronymics, used by the Egyptian peasants in general, not signifying "Father of Da'-oo'd," "Father of 'Al'ee," &c., but "whose father is (or was) Da'-oo'd," "—'Al'ee," &c.



cow, which barely afforded sustenance to himself and his family. Instead of pursuing the method usually followed when a fella'hh declares himself unable to pay the tax demanded of him, which is to give him a severe bastinading, the Na'zir, in this case, sent the Sheykh el-Bel'ed to bring the poor peasant's cow, and desired some of the fella'hhee'n to buy it. They saying that they had not sufficient money, he sent for a butcher, and desired him to kill the cow; which was done: he then told him to divide it into sixty pieces. The butcher asked for his pay; and was given the head of the cow. Sixty fella'hhee'n were then called together; and each of them was compelled to purchase, for a riya'l, a piece of the cow. The owner of the cow wept, weeping and complaining, to the Na'zir's superior, the late Mohham'-mad Bey, Desturda'r. "My master," said he, "I am oppressed and in misery: I had no property but one cow, a milch cow: I and my family lived upon her milk; and she ploughed for me, and threshed my corn; and my whole subsistence was derived from her: the Na'zir has taken her, and killed her, and cut her up into sixty pieces, and sold the pieces to my neighbours; to each a piece, for one riya'l; so that he obtained but sixty riya'ls for the whole, while the value of the cow was a hundred and twenty riya'ls, or more. I am oppressed and in misery, and a stranger in the place, for I came from another village; but the Na'zir had no pity on me. I and my family are become beggars, and have nothing left. Have mercy upon me, and give me justice: I implore it by thy hharee'm." The Desturda'r, having caused the Na'zir to be brought before him, asked him, "Where is the cow of this fella'hh?" "I have sold it," said the Na'zir. "For how much?" "For sixty riya'ls." "Why did you kill it and sell it?"



“ He owed sixty riyā’ls for land : so I took his cow, and killed it, and sold it for the amount.” “ Where is the butcher that killed it?” “ In Menoo’f.” The butcher was sent for, and brought. The Defsturda’r said to him, “ Why did you kill this man’s cow?” “ The Na’zir desired me,” he answered, “ and I could not oppose him : if I had attempted to do so, he would have beaten me, and destroyed my house : I killed it ; and the Na’zir gave me the head as my reward.” “ Man,” said the Defsturda’r, “ do you know the persons who bought the meat?” The butcher replied that he did. The Defsturda’r then desired his secretary to write the names of the sixty men, and an order to the sheykh of their village, to bring them to Menoo’f, where this complaint was made. The Na’zir and butcher were placed in confinement till the next morning ; when the sheykh of the village came, with the sixty fella’hhec’n. The two prisoners were then brought again before the Defsturda’r, who said to the sheykh and the sixty peasants, “ Was the value of this man’s cow sixty riyā’ls?” “ O our master,” they answered, “ her value was greater.” The Defsturda’r sent for the Cka’dee of Menoo’f, and said to him, “ O Cka’dee, here is a man oppressed by this Na’zir, who has taken his cow, and killed it ; and sold its flesh for sixty riyā’ls : what is thy judgment?” The Cka’dee replied, “ He is a cruel tyrant, who oppresses every one under his authority. Is not a cow worth a hundred and twenty riyā’ls, or more ? and he has sold this one for sixty riyā’ls : this is tyranny towards the owner.” The Defsturda’r then said to some of his soldiers, “ Take the Na’zir, and strip him, and bind him.” This done, he said to the butcher, “ Butcher, dost thou not fear God ? Thou hast killed the cow unjustly.” The butcher again urged that he was



obliged to obey the Na'zir. "Then," said the Defturda'r, "if I order thee to do a thing, wilt thou do it?" "I will do it," answered the butcher. "Kill the Na'zir," said the Defturda'r. Immediately, several of the soldiers present seized the Na'zir, and threw him down; and the butcher cut his throat, in the regular orthodox manner of killing animals for food. "Now, cut him up," said the Defturda'r, "into sixty pieces." This was done: the people concerned in the affair, and many others, looking on; but none daring to speak. The sixty peasants who had bought the meat of the cow were then called forward, one after another, and each was made to take a piece of the flesh of the Na'zir, and to pay for it two riyas; so that a hundred and twenty riyas were obtained from them: they were then dismissed; but the butcher remained. The Cka'dee was asked what should be the reward of the butcher; and answered that he should be paid as he had been paid by the Na'zir. The Defturda'r therefore ordered that the head of the Na'zir should be given to him; and the butcher went away with his worse than valueless burden, thanking God that he had not been more unfortunate, and scarcely believing himself to have so easily escaped until he arrived at his village. The money paid for the flesh of the Na'zir was given to the owner of the cow.

Most of the governors of provinces and districts carry their oppression far beyond the limits to which they are authorized to proceed by the Ba'sha; and even the sheykh of a village, in executing the commands of his superiors, abuses his lawful power: bribes, and the ties of relationship and marriage, influence him and them; and by lessening the oppression of some, who are more able to bear it, greatly increase that of others.



But the office of a sheykh of a village is far from being a sinecure : at the period when the taxes are demanded of him, he frequently receives a more severe *bastinading* than any of his inferiors ; for when the population of a village does not yield the sum required, their sheykh is often beaten for their default ; and not always does he produce his own proportion until he has been well thrashed. All the *fella'hhee'n* are proud of the stripes they receive for withholding their contributions ; and are often heard to boast of the number of blows which were inflicted upon them before they would give up their money. Ammianus Marcellinus gives precisely the same character to the Egyptians of his time\*.

The revenue of the Ba'sha of Egypt is generally said to amount to about three millions of pounds sterling †. Nearly half arises from the direct taxes on land, and from indirect exactions from the *fella'hhee'n* : the remainder, principally from the custom-taxes, the tax on palm-trees, a kind of income-tax, and the sale of various productions of the land ; by which sale, the government, in most instances, obtains a profit of more than fifty per cent.

The present Ba'sha has increased his revenue to this amount by most oppressive measures. He has dispossessed of their lands all the private proprietors throughout his dominions, allotting to each, as a partial compensation, a pension for life, proportioned to the extent and quality of the land which belonged to him. The farmer

\* Lib. xxii. The more easily the peasant pays, the more is he made to pay.

† Some estimate it at *five* millions ; others, at little more than *two* millions.



has, therefore, nothing to leave to his children but his hut, and perhaps a few cattle and some small savings.

The direct taxes on land are proportioned to the natural advantages of the soil. Their average amount is about 8*s.* per fedda'n, which is nearly equal to an English acre\*. But the cultivator can never calculate exactly the full amount of what the government will require of him: he suffers from indirect exactions of quantities, differing in different years, but always levied per fedda'n, of butter, honey, wax, wool, baskets of palm-leaves, ropes of the fibres of the palm-tree, and other commodities: he is also obliged to pay the hire of the camels which convey his grain to the government shoo'neh (or granary), and to defray various other expenses. A portion of the produce of his land is taken by the government †, and sometimes the whole produce, at a fixed and fair price, which, however, in many parts of Egypt, is retained to make up for the debts of the insolvent peasants ‡. The fella'hh, to supply the bare necessities of life, is often obliged to steal, and convey secretly to his hut, as much as he can of the produce of his land. He may either himself supply the seed for his land, or obtain it as a loan from the government; but in the latter case he seldom obtains a sufficient quantity; a considerable portion being generally stolen

\* The fedda'n has lately been reduced: it was equal to about an English acre and one-tenth a few years ago; and somewhat more at an earlier period.

† Of some productions, as cotton, flax, &c., the government always takes the whole.

‡ Even the debts of the peasantry of one village are often imposed upon the inhabitants of another who have paid all that is justly due from them.



by the persons through whose hands it passes before he receives it. To relate all the oppressions which the peasantry of Egypt endure, would require too much space in the present work. It would be scarcely possible for them to suffer more, and live. It may be hardly necessary, therefore, to add, that few of them engage, with assiduity, in the labours of agriculture, unless compelled to do so by their superiors.

The Ba'sha has not only taken possession of the lands of the private proprietors, but he has also thrown into his treasury a considerable proportion of the incomes of religious and charitable institutions, deeming their accumulated wealth superfluous. He first imposed a tax (of nearly half the amount of the regular land-tax) upon all land which had become a *wuckf* (or legacy unalienable by law) to any mosque, fountain, public school, &c.; and afterwards took absolute possession of such lands, granting certain annuities in lieu of them, for keeping in repair the respective buildings, and for the maintenance of those persons attached to them, as Na'zirs (or wardens), religious ministers, inferior servants, students, and other pensioners. He has thus rendered himself extremely odious to most persons of the religious and learned professions, and especially to the Na'zirs of the mosques, who too generally enriched themselves from the funds intrusted to their care, which were, in most cases, superabundant. The *household* property of the mosques and other public institutions (the *wuckfs* of numerous individuals of various ranks) the Ba'sha has hitherto left inviolate.

The tax upon the palm-trees has been calculated to amount to about a hundred thousand pounds sterling.



The trees are rated according to their qualities ; generally at a piaster and a half each.

The income-tax, which is called *fir'deh*, is generally a twelfth or more of a man's annual income or salary, when that can be ascertained. The maximum, however, is fixed at five hundred piasters. In the large towns it is levied upon individuals ; in the villages, upon houses. The income-tax of all the inhabitants of the metropolis amounts to eight thousand purses, or about forty thousand pounds sterling.

The inhabitants of the metropolis and of other large towns pay a heavy tax on grain, &c. The tax on each kind of grain is eighteen piasters per ardeb' (or about five bushels) ; which sum is equal to the price of wheat in the country after a good harvest.



## CHAPTER V.

## DOMESTIC LIFE.

HAVING sufficiently ~~considered~~ the foundations of the moral and social state of the Moos'lims of Egypt, we may now take a view of their domestic life and ordinary habits; and, first, let us confine our attention to the higher and middle orders.

A master of a family, or any person who has arrived at manhood, and is not in a menial situation, or of very low condition, is commonly honoured with the appellation of “the *sheykh*,” prefixed to his name. The word “*sheykh*” literally signifies “an elder,” or “an aged person;” but it is used as synonymous with our appellation of “Mister\* :” a *sheree'f*, or descendant of the Prophet, is called “the *sey'd*,” or “the *sey'yid*” (master, or lord), whatever be his station. Many *sheree'fs* are employed in the lowest offices: there are servants, dust-men, and beggars, of the honoured race of Mohham'mad; but all of them are entitled to the distinctive appellation above mentioned, and privileged to wear the green turban†; many of them, however, not only among

\* Though more particularly applied to a learned man, or a reputed saint.

† Men and women of this caste often contract marriages with persons who are not members of the same; and as the title of *sheree'f* is inherited from either of the parents, the number of persons who enjoy this distinction has become very considerable.



those of humble station, but also among the wealthy, and particularly the learned, assume neither of these prerogatives; preferring the title of "sheykh," and the white turban. A man who has performed the pilgrimage is generally called "the *hha'gg* \*;" and a woman who has alike distinguished herself, "the *hha'ggeh*:" yet there are many pilgrims who, like those sheree'fs just before alluded to, prefer the title of "sheykh." The general appellation of a lady is "the *sitt*," which signifies "the mistress," or "the lady."

Before I describe the ordinary habits of the master of a family, I must mention the various classes of persons of whom the family may consist. The *hharee'm*, or the females of the house, have distinct apartments allotted to them; and into these apartments (which, as well as the persons to whom they are appropriated, are called "the *hharee'm*") no males are allowed to enter, excepting the master of the family, and certain other near relations, and children. The *hharee'm* may consist, first, of a wife, or wives (to the number of four); secondly, of female slaves, some of whom, namely, white and Abyssinian slaves, are generally concubines, and others (the black slaves) kept merely for servile offices, as cooking, waiting upon the ladies, &c.; thirdly, of female free servants, who are, in no case, concubines, or not legitimately so. The male dependants may consist of white and of black slaves, and free servants; but are mostly of the last-mentioned class. Very few of the Egyptians avail themselves of the licence which their

\* This word is thus pronounced by the inhabitants of Cairo and the greater part of Egypt; but in most other countries where Arabic is spoken, *hha'jj*. The Turks and Persians use, instead of it, the synonymous Arabic word *hha'jee*.



religion allows them, of having four wives; and still smaller is the number of those who have two or more wives, and concubines besides. Even most of those men who have but one wife are content, for the sake of domestic peace, if for no other reason, to remain without a concubine slave: but some prefer the possession of an Abyssinian slave to the more expensive maintenance of a wife; and keep a black slave girl, or an Egyptian female servant, to wait upon her, to clean and keep in order the apartments of the *hharee'm*, and to cook. It is seldom that two or more wives are kept in the same house: if they be, they generally have distinct apartments. Of male servants, the master of a family keeps, if he can afford to do so, one or more to wait upon him and his male guests; another, who is called a *sack'cka*, or water-carrier, but who is particularly a servant of the *hharee'm*, and attends the ladies when they go out\*; a *bow'wall*, or door-keeper, who constantly sits at the door of the house; and a *sa'is*, or groom, for the horse, mule, or ass. Few of the Egyptians have *memloo'ks*, or male white slaves; most of these being in the possession of rich 'Osma'ulees (or 'Turks); and scarcely any but Turks of high rank keep eunuchs: but a wealthy Egyptian merchant is proud of having a black slave to ride or walk behind him, and to carry his pipe.

The Egyptian is a very early riser; as he retires to sleep at an early hour: it is his duty to be up and dressed before daybreak, when he should say the morning-prayers. In general, while the master of a family is performing the religious ablution, and saying his pray-

\* Unless there be a eunuch. The *sack'cka* is generally the chief of the servants.

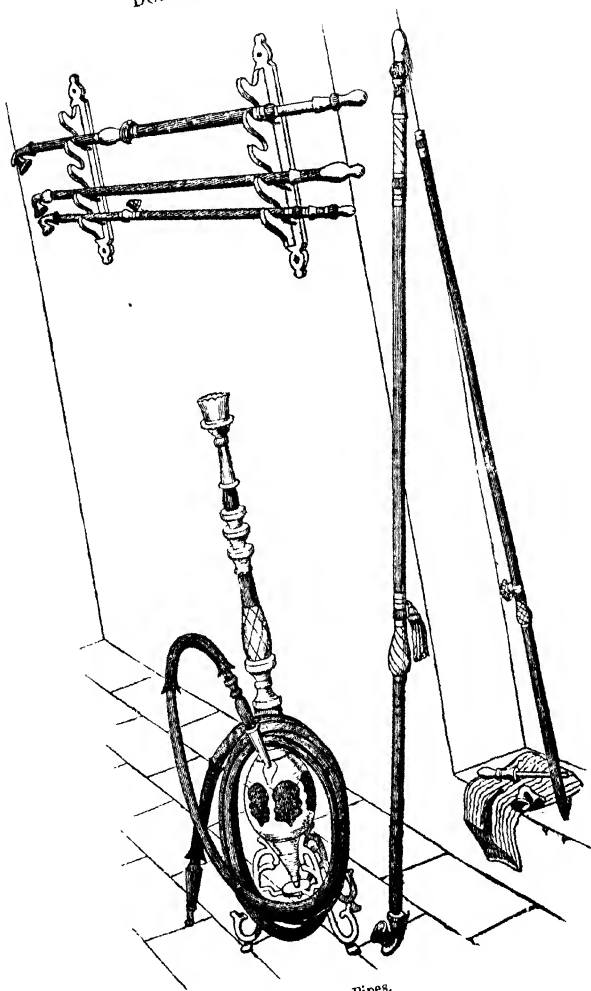


ers, his wife or slave is preparing for him a cup of coffee, and filling his pipe, which she presents to him as soon as he has acquitted himself of his religious duties.

Many of the Egyptians take nothing before noon but the cup of coffee and the pipe : others take a light meal at an early hour. The meal of breakfast (*el-fatoo'r*) generally consists of bread, with eggs, butter, cheese, clouted cream, or curdled milk, &c. ; or of a *fateh'reh*, which is a kind of pastry, saturated with butter, made very thin, and folded over and over like a napkin : it is eaten alone, or with a little honey poured over it, or sugar. A very common dish for breakfast is *foo'l moodem'mes*, or beans, similar to our horse-beans, slowly boiled, during a whole night, in an earthen vessel, buried, all but the neck, in the hot ashes of an oven or a bath, and having the mouth closely stopped : they are eaten with linseed-oil, or butter, and generally with a little lime-juice : thus prepared, they are sold in the morning in the *soo'eks* (or markets) of Cairo and other towns. A meal is often made (by those who cannot afford luxuries) of bread and a mixture called *doock'-ckah*, which is commonly composed of salt and pepper, with *za'atar* (or wild marjoram) or mint or cumin-seed, and with one, or more, or all, of the following ingredients ; namely, coriander-seed, cinnamon, sesame, and *hhoml'-moos* (or chick-peas) : each mouthful of bread is dipped in this mixture. The bread is always made in the form of a round flat cake, generally about a span in width, and a finger's breadth in thickness.

The pipe and the cup of coffee are enjoyed by almost all persons who can afford such luxuries, very early in the morning, and oftentimes during the day. There are many men who are scarcely ever seen without a





Pipes.



pipe either in their hand or carried behind them by a servant. The smoker keeps his tobacco for daily use in a purse or bag made of shawl-stuff, or silk, or velvet, which is often accompanied with a small pouch containing a flint and steel, and some agaric tinder, and is usually crammed into his bosom.

The pipe (which is called by many names, as *shib'ook* \*, 'oo'd, &c.) is generally between four and five feet long: some pipes are shorter, and some are of greater length. The most common kind used in Egypt is made of a kind of wood called *gur'mush'uck* †. The greater part of the stick (from the mouth-piece to about three quarters of its length) is covered with silk, which is confined at each extremity by gold thread, often intertwined with coloured silks, or by a tube of gilt silver; and at the lower extremity of the covering is a tassel of silk. The covering was originally designed to be moistened with water, in order to cool the pipe, and, consequently, the smoke, by evaporation: but this is only done when the pipe is old, or not handsome. Cherry-stick pipes, which are never covered, are also used by many persons, particularly in the winter. In summer, the smoke is not so cool from the cherry-stick pipe as from the kind before mentioned. The bowl (called *hhag'ar*) is of baked earth, coloured red or brown ‡. The mouth-piece (*foom'*, or *turked'beh*) is composed of two or more pieces of opaque, light-coloured amber, interjoined by ornaments of enamelled gold, agate, jasper, cornelian, or some other precious sub-

\* From the Turkish *chiboo'ck*. † I believe it is maple.

‡ To preserve the matting or carpet from injury, a small brass tray is often placed beneath the bowl; and a small tray of wood is made use of to receive the ashes of the tobacco.



stance. It is the most costly part of the pipe: the price of one of the kind most generally used by persons of the middle order, is from about one to three pounds sterling. A wooden tube passes through it. This is often changed, as it soon becomes foul from the oil of the tobacco. The pipe also requires to be cleaned very often, which is done with tow, by means of a long wire. Many poor men in Cairo gain their livelihood by going about to clean pipes.

The tobacco smoked by persons of the higher orders, and some others, in Egypt, is of a very mild and delicious flavour. It is mostly from the neighbourhood of El-La'dickee'yeh, in Syria. The best kind is the "mountain tobacco" (*dookh'kha'n geb'elec*). A stronger kind, which takes its name from the town of Soo'r (*dookh'kha'n Soo'ree*), sometimes mixed with *geb'elec*, is used by most persons of the middle orders. In smoking, the people of Egypt and of other countries of the East draw in their breath freely; so that much of the smoke descends into the lungs; and the terms which they use to express "smoking tobacco" signify "*drinking* smoke," or "*drinking* tobacco:" for the same word signifies both "smoke" and "tobacco." Few of them spit **while** smoking: I have very seldom seen any do so.

Some of the Egyptians use the Persian pipe, in which the smoke passes through water. The pipe of this kind most commonly used by persons of the higher classes is called *na'rgee'leh*, because the vessel that contains the water is a cocoa-nut, of which "*na'rgee'leh*" is an Arabic name. Another kind, which has a glass vase, is called *shee'sheh*\*. Each has a very long, flexible tube. A particular kind of tobacco, called *toomba'k*,

\* A Persian word, signifying "glass."



from Persia, is used in the water-pipe: it is first washed several times, and put into the pipe-bowl while damp; and two or three pieces of live charcoal are placed on the top. Its flavour is mild, and very agreeable; but the strong inhalation necessary in this mode of smoking is injurious to persons of delicate lungs\*. In using the Persian pipe, the person as freely draws the smoke into his lungs as he would inhale pure air. The great prevalence of liver-complaints in Arabia is attributed to the general use of the *na'rgee'leh*; and many persons in Egypt suffer severely from the same cause. A kind of pipe, called *go'zeh*†, which is similar to the *na'rgee'leh*, excepting that it has a short cane tube, instead of the snake (or flexible one), and no stand, is used by men of the lowest class, for smoking both the *toomba'k* and the intoxicating *hhashee'sh*, or hemp.

The coffee (*ckah'weh*‡) is made very strong, and without sugar or milk. The coffee-cup (which is called *finga'n*) is small; generally holding not quite an ounce and a half of liquid. It is of porcelain, or Dutch-ware, and, being without a handle, is placed within another cup (called *zurf*), of silver or brass, according to the circumstances of the owner, and, both in shape and size, nearly resembling our egg-cup§. In preparing the

\* It is, however, often recommended in the case of a cough. One of my friends, the most celebrated of the poets of Cairo, who is much troubled by asthma, uses the *na'rgee'leh* almost incessantly from morning till night.

† "Go'zeh" is the most common name.

‡ This is the name of the *beverage*: the *berries* (whether whole or pounded) are called *boon'n*.

§ In a full service there are ten *finga'ns* and *zurf*s of uniform kinds, and often another *finga'n* and *zurf* of a superior kind for the master of the house, or for a distinguished guest. In the accompanying





Coffee service.

coffee, the water is first made to boil: the coffee (freshly roasted, and pounded) is then put in, and stirred; after which the pot is again placed on the fire, once or twice, until the coffee begins to simmer; when it is taken off; and its contents are poured out into the cups while the surface is yet creamy. The Egyptians are excessively fond of pure and strong coffee, thus prepared; and very seldom add sugar to it (though some do so when they are unwell), and never, milk or cream; but a little cardamom-seed\* is often added to it. It is a common custom, also, to fumigate the cup with the smoke of mastic; and the wealthy sometimes impregnate the coffee with the delicious fragrance of amber-grist†. The most general mode of doing this is, to put

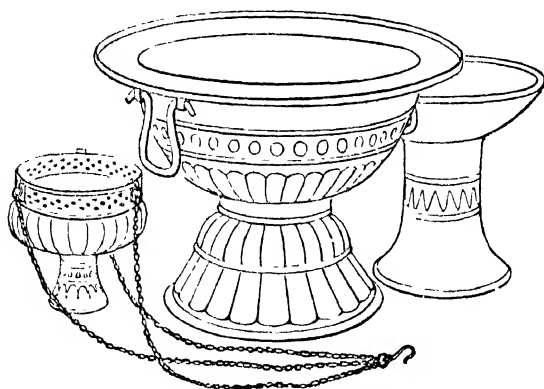
sketch, the coffee-pot (*bek'reg*, or *buk'rug*) and the zurfs and tray are of silver, and are represented on a scale of one-eighth of the real size. Below this set are a similar zurf and finga'n, on a scale of one-fourth, and a brass zurf, with the finga'n placed in it. Some zurfs are of plain or gilt silver filigree; and a few opulent persons have them of gold. Many Moos'lims, however, religiously disallow all utensils of gold and of silver.

\* *Hhab'b-ha'n*.

† *'Am'bar*.



about a carat-weight of ambergris in a coffee-pot, and melt it over a fire ; then make the coffee in another pot, in the manner before described, and, when it has settled a little, pour it into the pot which contains the ambergris. Some persons make use of the ambergris, for the same purpose, in a different way ; sticking a piece of it, of the weight of about two carats, in the bottom of the cup, and then pouring in the coffee : a piece of the weight above-mentioned will serve for two or three weeks. This mode is often adopted by persons who like always to have the coffee which they themselves drink flavoured with this perfume, and do not give all their visitors the same luxury. The coffee-pot is sometimes brought in a vessel of silver or brass (called 'a'z'ckee), containing burning charcoal. This vessel is suspended by three chains. In presenting the coffee, the servant holds the foot of the zurf with his thumb and



'A'z'ckee and Mun'ekuds\*.

\* One of the latter (that to the right) is an earthen vessel. Each of the above utensils is represented on a scale of about one-eighth of the real size.



first finger. In receiving the *finger* and *zurf*, he makes use of both hands, placing the left beneath and the right above at the same instant.

In cold weather, a brasier, or chafing-dish (called *mun'ckud*), of tinned copper, full of burning charcoal, is placed on the floor; and sometimes perfume is burnt in it. The Egyptians take great delight in perfumes \*; and often fumigate their apartments. The substance most commonly used for this purpose is frankincense of an inferior quality, called *bakhoo'r el-burr*. Benzoin † and aloes-wood ‡ are also used for the same purpose.

If he can conveniently afford to keep a horse, mule, or ass, or to hire an ass, the Egyptian is seldom seen walking far beyond the threshold of his own house; but very few of the people of Cairo, or of the other towns, venture to expose themselves to the suspicion of possessing superfluous wealth, and, consequently, to greater exactions of the government than they would otherwise suffer, by keeping horses §. The modern saddle of the horse is generally padded, and covered with cloth or velvet, embroidered, or otherwise ornamented; and the head-stall and breast-leather are adorned with silk tassels, and coins, or other ornaments, of silver. Wealthy merchants, and the great 'ool'ama, usually ride mules. The saddle of the mule is, generally, nearly the same as that of the ass; of which a sketch is inserted: when the rider is one of the 'ool'ama, it is covered with a *segga'deh* (or prayer-carpet): so, also, sometimes, is the ladies' saddle; from which, however,

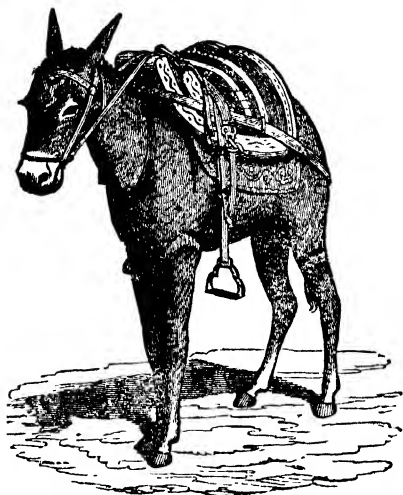
\* They sometimes perfume the beard and mustaches with civet.

† *Ga'wee*.

‡ *'Oo'd*.

§ Whether walking or riding, a person of the higher classes is usually attended by a servant bearing his pipe.





An Ass equipped in the usual manner for riding\*.

the former differs considerably; as will be shown hereafter. Asses are most generally used for riding through the narrow and crowded streets of Cairo; and there are many for hire: their usual pace is an easy amble. The ass is furnished with a stuffed saddle; the forepart of which is covered with red leather, and the seat, most commonly, with a kind of soft woollen lace, similar to our coach-lace, of red, yellow, and other colours. The stirrup-leathers are, in every case, very short. The horseman is preceded by a servant, or by two servants, to clear the way; and, for the same purpose, a servant generally runs beside or behind the ass, or sometimes before; calling out to the passengers to move out of the way to the right or left, or to take care of their backs, faces, sides, feet or heels†. The rider, however, must

\* Nearly the whole of its coat is closely shorn.

† *Yemec'nah!* *shima'luk!* (to thy right! to thy left!), *dah'rah!*



be vigilant, and not trust merely to his servant, or he may be thrown down by the wide load of a camel; which accident, indeed, is sometimes unavoidable in the more narrow and crowded streets. His pipe is generally carried by the servant; and filled and lighted if he dismount at a house or shop.

If he have no regular business to employ him, the Egyptian spends the greater part of the day in riding, paying visits, or making purchases; or in smoking and sipping coffee and chatting with a friend at home; or he passes an hour or more in the morning enjoying the luxuries of a public bath. At noon, he has again to say prayers, if he fulfil the duties imposed on him by his religion: but, as I have remarked on a former occasion, there are comparatively few persons among the Egyptians who do not sometimes neglect these duties; and there are many who scarcely ever pray. Directly after mid-day, he dines; then takes a pipe and a cup of coffee, and, in hot weather, usually indulges himself with a nap. Often he retires to recline in the *hharee'm*;

(thy back!), *wish'shak*! (thy face!), *gm'bak*! (thy side!), *rug'lak*! (thy foot!), *ka'abak*! (thy heel!), and, to a Turk, *sa'chin*! (take care!), are the most common cries. The following appellations are also often added:—*ya' esen'dee*! (to a Turk), *ya' sheykh*! (to an old, or a middle-aged, Moos'lim native), *ya' sub'lee*! (to a young man), *ya' wel'ed*! or *ya' w'nee*! (to a boy), *ya' shereef*! (to a green-turbaned descendant of the Prophet), *ya' m'a'llim*! (to a native Christian, or a Jew), *ya' khawd'geh*! (to a Frank), *ya' sutt*! (to a lady, or a female of the middle order), and *ya' bunt*! that is “daughter,” or “girl” (to a poor female). A woman of the lower class, however old she be, the servant must call “girl,” or “daughter,” or probably she will not move an inch out of the way. A little girl, or young woman, is often called *'aroo'seh*, or “bride;” and *hha'ggeh*, or “female pilgrim,” is an appellation often given to women in the streets.



where a wife or female slave watches over his repose, or rubs the soles of his feet with her hands. On such occasions, and at other times when he wishes to enjoy privacy, every person who comes to pay him a visit is told, by the servant, that he is in the *hharee'm*; and no friend expects him to be called thence, unless on very urgent business. From the time of the afternoon-prayers, until sunset (the next time of prayer), he generally enjoys, again, his pipe and a cup of coffee in the society of some one or more of his friends at home or abroad. Shortly after sunset, he sups.

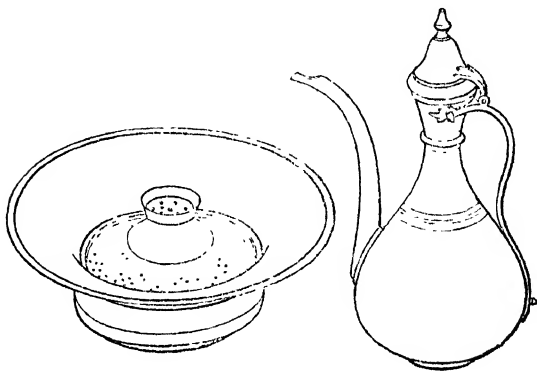
I must now describe the meals of dinner (*el-ghud'a*) and supper (*el'ash'a*), and the manner and etiquette of eating. The same remarks will apply to both these repasts; excepting that supper is always the principal meal. It is the general custom to cook in the afternoon; and what remains of the supper is eaten the next day for dinner, when there are no guests in the house. The master of a family generally dines and sups with his wife or wives and children; but there are many men, particularly in the higher classes, who are too proud to do this, or too much engaged in society to be able to do so, unless on some few occasions; and there are men even in the lowest class who scarcely ever eat with their wives or children. When a person is paying a visit to a friend, and the hour of dinner or supper arrives, it is incumbent on the master of the house to order the meal to be brought; and the same is generally considered necessary if the visitor be a stranger.

Every person, before he sits down to the table, or rather to the tray, washes his hands\*, and sometimes his mouth also, with soap and water; or, at least, has

\* See Mark, vii. 3.



some water poured upon his right hand. A servant brings to him a basin and ewer (called *tisht* and *ibree'ck*), of tinned copper, or of brass \*. The former



*Tisht and Ibree'ck* †.

of these has a cover pierced with holes, with a raised receptacle for the soap in the middle; and the water, being poured upon the hands, passes through this cover into the space below; so that, when the basin is brought to a second person, the water with which the former one has washed is not seen. A napkin (*foo'tah*) is given to each person.

A round tray (called *seenee'yeh*) of tinned copper, or sometimes of brass, generally between two and three feet in diameter, serves as a table; being placed upon a stool (*koor'see*) about fifteen inches high, made of wood, and often covered with mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell, bone, &c. These two pieces of furniture compose the *soof'rah*

\* In the houses of some of the opulent, these utensils are of silver. I have also seen some of gilt copper.

† The width of the former is fourteen inches; and the height of the latter, the same.



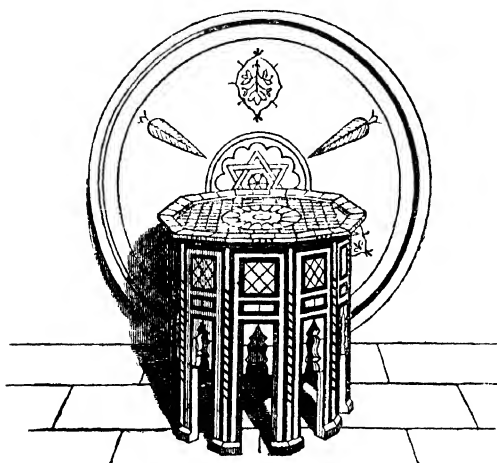


Washing before or after a Meal.

Round cakes of bread, such as have been before described, sometimes cut in halves across the middle, are placed round the tray, with several limes, cut in two, to be squeezed over any of the dishes that may require the acid ; and a spoon of box-wood, or of ebony, or tortoise-shell, is put for each person. The bread often serves as a plate. Several dishes of tinned copper, or of china, containing different kinds of viands, vegetables, &c., are then placed upon the tray, according to the common fashion of the country ; or only one dish is put on at a time, after the Turkish mode.

The persons who are to partake of the repast sit upon the floor around the tray ; each with his napkin upon his knees : or, if the tray be placed near the edge of a low *deewa'n*, which is often done, some of the per-





Koor'see and Seence'yeh.

sons may sit on the *deewa'n*, and the others on the floor: but if the party be numerous, the tray is placed in the middle of the room, and they sit round it with one knee on the ground, and the other (the right) raised; and, in this manner, as many as twelve persons may sit round a tray three feet wide. Each person bares his right arm to the elbow, or tucks up the hanging end of his sleeve. Before he begins to eat, he says "*Bi-smi-l'lah*" (In the name of God)\*. This is generally said in a low, but audible voice; and by the master of the house first. It is considered both as a grace and as an invitation to any person to partake of the meal; and when any one is addressed with "*Bi-smi-l'lah*," or "*Tafud'dal*" (which latter signifies, in this case, "Do me the favour to partake of the repast"), he must reply,

\* Or "*Bi-smi-l'l'hi-r-rahhma'ni-r-rahhe'm*" (In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful).





A Party at Dinner or Supper \*.

if he do not accept the invitation, "*Henec'-an*" (or "May it benefit"), or use some similar expression: else it will be feared that an evil eye has been cast upon the food; and they say that, "in the food that is coveted" (or upon which an envious eye has fallen), "there is no blessing." But the manner in which the Egyptian often presses a stranger to eat with him shows that feelings of hospitality most forcibly dictate the "*Bi-smi-l'lah*." The master of the house first begins to eat; the guests or others immediately follow his ex-

\* One of the servants is holding a water-bottle: the other, a fly-whisk made of palm-leaves.



ample. Neither knives nor forks are used: the thumb and two fingers of the right hand serve instead of those instruments; but the spoons are used for soup or rice or other things that cannot be easily eaten without; and both hands may be used in particular cases, as will be presently explained. When there are several dishes upon the tray, each person takes of any that he likes, or of every one in succession: when only one dish is placed upon the tray at a time, each takes from it a few mouthfuls, and it is quickly removed, to give place to another\*. To pick out a delicate morsel, and hand it to a friend, is esteemed polite. The manner of eating with the fingers, as practised in Egypt and other Eastern countries, is more delicate than may be imagined by Europeans who have not witnessed it, nor heard it correctly described. Each person breaks off a small piece of bread, dips it in the dish, and then conveys it to his mouth, together with a small portion of the meat or other contents of the dish †. The piece of bread is generally doubled together, so as to enclose the morsel of meat, &c.; and only the thumb and first and second fingers are commonly used. When a person takes a piece of meat too large for a single mouthful, he usually places it upon his bread.

The food is dressed in such a manner that it may be easily eaten in the mode above-described. It generally consists, for the most part, of *yukh'nee*, or stewed meat, with chopped onions, or with a quantity of *ba'miyehs* ‡,

\* Our Saviour and his disciples thus ate from one dish. See Matt. xxvi. 23.

† Or he merely sops his morsel of bread in the dish. See Ruth, ii. 14; and John, xiii. 26.

‡ The *ba'miyeh* is the esculent *hibiscus*: the part which is



or other vegetables; *cha'woor'meh*, or a richer stew with onions; *war'uck mahh'shee*, or vine-leaves, or bits of lettuce-leaf or cabbage-leaf, with a mixture of rice and minced meat (delicately seasoned with salt, pepper, and onions, and often with garlic, parsley, &c.) wrapped up in them, and boiled; cucumbers (*khiya'*), or black, white, or red *ba'dinga'ns*\*, or a kind of gourd (called *char'ä koo'seh*) of the size and shape of a small cucumber, which are all *mahh'shee*, or stuffed, with the same composition as the leaves above-mentioned; and *keba'b*, or small morsels of mutton or lamb, roasted on skewers. Many dishes consist wholly, or for the most part, of vegetables; such as cabbage, purslain, spinach, beans, lupins, chick-peas, gourd cut into small pieces, colocasia, lentils, &c. Fish, dressed with oil, is also a common dish. Most of the meats are cooked with clarified butter; on account of the deficiency of fat; and are made very rich: the butter, in the hot season, is perfectly liquid. When a fowl is placed whole on the tray, both hands are generally required to separate the joints; or two persons, each using the right hand alone, perform this operation together: but some will do it very cleverly without assistance, and with a single hand. Many of the Arabs will not allow the left hand to touch food in any case†, excepting when the right is maimed. A boned fowl, stuffed with raisins, pistachio-nuts, crumbled bread, and parsley, is not an uncommon

eaten is a polygonal pod, generally between one and three inches in length, and of the thickness of a small finger: it is full of seeds and nutritive mucilage, and has a very pleasant flavour. A little lime-juice is usually dropped on the plate of *ba'miyehs*.

\* The black and white *ba'dinga'n* are the fruits of two kinds of egg-plant: the red is the tomato.

† Because used for unclean purposes.



dish ; and even a whole lamb, stuffed with pistachionuts, &c , is sometimes served up ; but the meat is easily separated with one hand. Sweets are often mixed with stewed meat, &c. ; as, for instance, 'anna'b (or jujubes) and sugar with yukh'nee. Various kinds of sweets are also served up, and often in no particular order with respect to other meats. A favourite sweet dish is *koona'feh*, which is made of wheat-flour, and resembles vermicelli, but is finer ; it is boiled, and sweetened with sugar or honey. A dish of water-melon (*luttee'kh*), if in season, generally forms part of the meal. This is cut up about a quarter of an hour before, and left to cool in the external air, or in a current of air, by the evaporation of the juice on the surfaces of the slices ; but it is always watched during this time, lest a serpent should come to it, and poison it by its breath or bite ; for this reptile is said to be extremely fond of the water-melon, and to smell it at a great distance. Water-melons are very abundant in Egypt, and mostly very delicious and wholesome. A dish of boiled rice (called *rooz'z moofel'fel*, the *pila'v* of the Turks), mixed with a little butter, and seasoned with salt and pepper, is generally that from which the last morsels are taken ; but, in the houses of the wealthy, this is often followed by a bowl of *khoousha'f\**, a sweet drink, commonly consisting of water with raisins boiled in it, and then sugar : when cool, a little rose water is dropped into it†. The water-melon frequently supplies the place of this‡.

\* So called from the Persian *kho'sh a'b*, or "sweet water."

† It is drunk with ladles of tortoise-shell, or cocoa-nut.

‡ The principal and best fruits of Egypt are dates, grapes, oranges and citrons of various kinds, common figs, sycamore-figs, prickly-pears, pomegranates, bananas, and a great variety of



The Egyptians eat very moderately ; though quickly. Each person, as soon as he has finished, says “ *El-hham'doo li-l'l'a'h* ” (Praise be to God)\*, and gets up, without waiting till the others have done†: he then washes his hands and mouth with soap and water; the basin and ewer being held by a servant, as before.

The only beverage at meals is water of the Nile, or, sometimes, at the tables of the rich, sherbet, which will presently be described. The water of the Nile is remarkably good ; but that of all the wells in Cairo and in other parts of Egypt is slightly brackish. In general, water is drunk either from an earthen bottle or from a brass cup‡. The water-bottles are of two kinds ; one called *do'ruck*, and the other *ckool'leh* : the former has a narrow, and the latter a wide, mouth. They are made of a greyish, porous earth, which cools the water deliciously, by evaporation ; and they are, therefore, generally placed in a current of air. The interior is often blackened with the smoke of some resinous wood, and then perfumed with the smoke of *ckuf'al§* wood and mastic ; the latter used last. A small earthen vessel (called *mib'khar'ah*) is employed in performing these operations, to contain the burning charcoal, which is

melons. From this enumeration it appears that there are not many good fruits in this country.

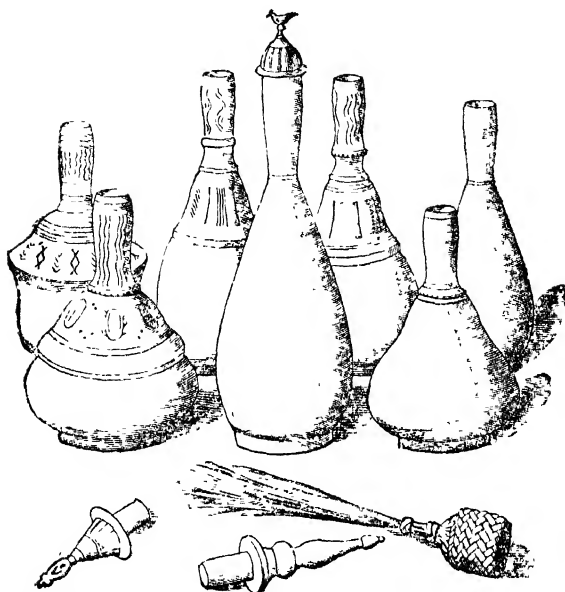
\* Or “ *El-hham'doo li-l'l'a'hu ru'bi-l-'d'lamee'n* ” (Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures).

† It is deemed highly improper to rise during a meal, even from respect to a superior who may approach. It has been mentioned before, that the Prophet forbade his followers to rise while eating, or when about to eat, even if the time of prayer arrived.

‡ The ancient Egyptians used drinking-cups of brass. (Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 37.)

§ *Amyris kafal*. Forskal. An Arabian tree.





Water-bottles (Do'rucks), with covers of different kinds. The bottles in the foremost row are one sixth of the real size.



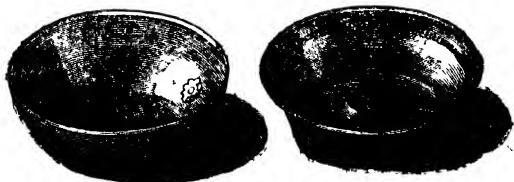
Water-bottles (Ckoollehs).





Earthen Mib'khar'ah, and China Do'ruck, one-sixth of the real size.

required to ignite the wood, and the mastic; and the water-bottle is held inverted over it. A strip of rag is tied round the neck of the do'ruck, at the distance of about an inch from the mouth, to prevent the smoke-black from extending too far upon the exterior of the bottle. Many persons also put a little orange-flower-water\* into the bottles. This gives a very agreeable flavour to their contents. The bottles have stoppers of silver, brass, tin, wood, or palm-leaves; and are generally placed in a tray of tinned copper, which receives the water that exudes from them. In cold weather, china bottles are used in many houses instead of those above-described, which then render the water too cold. The two most common forms of drinking-cups are here represented. Every person, before



Brass Drinking-cups, one-fifth of the real size.

\* *Mo'yet zahr*, or *mo'yet zah'r na'rin'g*.



and after drinking, repeats the same ejaculations as before and after eating; and this he does each time that he drinks during a meal: each friend present then says to him "May it benefit" \*; to which the reply is "God benefit thee" †.

Though we read, in some of the delightful "Tales of a Thousand and One Nights," of removing "the table of viands" ‡ and bringing "the table of wine" §, this prohibited beverage is not often introduced in general society, either during or after the meal, or at other times, by the Moos'lims of Egypt in the present day. Many of them, however, habitually indulge in drinking wine with select parties of their acquaintance. The servants of a man who is addicted to this habit know such of his friends as may be admitted, if they happen to call when he is engaged in this unlawful pleasure; and to all others they say that he is not at home, or that he is in the hharee'm. Drinking wine is indulged in by such persons before and after supper, and during that meal; but it is most approved *before* supper; as they say that it quickens the appetite. The "table of wine" is usually thus prepared, according to a penitent Moos'lim wine-bibber, who is one of my friends (I cannot speak on this subject from my own experience; for, as I never drink wine, I have never been invited to join a Moos'lim wine-party):—a round japanned tray, or a glass dish, is placed on the stool before-mentioned: on this are generally arranged two cut-glass jugs, one containing wine||, and the other, rosoglio ¶; and sometimes two or

\* *Henee'-an.*

† *Al'lah yehen'nee'k* (for *yooohen'nee'k*).

‡ *Soof'rat et-ta'a'm.*

§ *Soof'rat el-mosda'm.*

|| *Nebee'd, or mooda'm.*

¶ *'Am'ber'ee.*



more bottles besides: several small glasses are placed with these; and glass saucers of dried and fresh fruits, and, perhaps, pickles: lastly, two candles, and, often, a bunch of flowers stuck in a candlestick, are put upon the tray.

The Egyptians have various kinds of sherbets, or sweet drinks. The most common kind\* is merely sugar and water; but very sweet: lemonade† is another: a third kind, the most esteemed‡, is prepared from a hard conserve of violets, made by pounding violet-flowers, and then boiling them with sugar: this violet-sherbet is of a green colour: a fourth kind§ is prepared from mulberries: a fifth||, from sorrel. There is also a kind of sherbet sold in the streets¶, which is made with raisins, as its name implies; another kind, which is a strong infusion of licorice-root, and called by the name of that root\*\*; and a third kind, which is prepared from the fruit of the locust-tree, and called, in like manner, by the name of the fruit††. The sherbet is served in covered glass cups containing about half a pint measure, or rather more; some of which (the more common kind) are ornamented with gilt flowers, &c. The sherbet-cups are placed on a round tray, and covered with a round piece of embroidered silk, or cloth of gold. On the right arm of the person who presents the sherbet is hung a large oblong napkin with a wide embroidered border of

\* Called simply *shurba't*, or *shurba't sook'kar*, sherbet of sugar.

‡ *Ley'moo'na'teh*, or *shara'b el-leymoo'n*.

† *Shara'b el-benef'seg*.

§ *Shara'b et-too't*.

|| *Shara'b el-hhommey'd*.

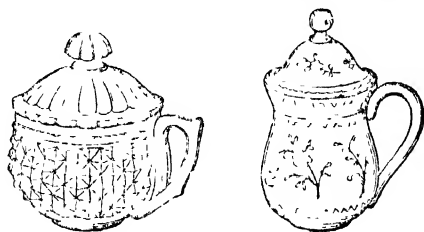
¶ Called *zebec'b*. This name is also given to an intoxicating conserve.

\*\* *'Er'ch soo's*.

†† *Khurroo'b*.



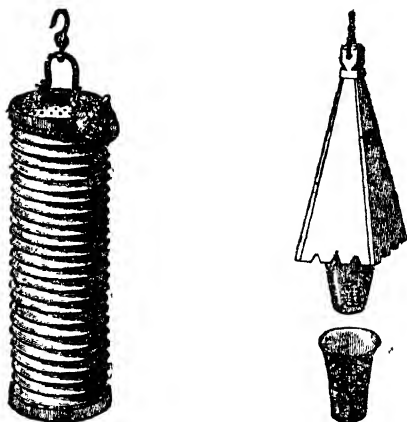
gold and coloured silks at each end. This is ostensibly offered for the purpose of wiping the lips after drinking the sherbet; but it is really not so much for use as for display: the lips are seldom or scarcely touched with it.



Sherbet-cups

The interval between supper and the *'esh'ë*, or time of the night-prayers, is generally passed in smoking a pipe, and sipping a cup of coffee. The enjoyment of the pipe may be interrupted by prayer, but is continued afterwards; and sometimes draughts or chess, or some other game, or at least conversation, contributes to make the time glide away more agreeably. The members of an Egyptian family in easy circumstances may pass their time very pleasantly; but they do so in a quiet way. The men often pay evening visits to their friends at, or after, supper-time. They commonly use, on these and similar occasions, a folding lantern (*fa'nood's*), composed of waxed cloth strained over rings of wire, and a top and bottom of tinned copper. This kind of lantern is here represented, together with the common lamp (*ckandee'l*), and its usual receptacle of wood, which serves to protect the flame from the wind. The lamp is a small vessel of glass, having a little tube in the bottom, in which is stuck a wick formed of cotton twisted round a piece of straw. Some water is poured in first, and then the oil. A lamp of this kind is often hung





Lantern and Lamp

over the entrance of a house. By night, the interiors of the houses present a more dull appearance than in the day: the light of one or two candles (placed on the floor or on a stool, and sometimes surrounded by a large glass shade, or enclosed in a glass lantern, on account of the windows being merely of lattice-work) is generally thought sufficient for a large and lofty saloon. Few of the Egyptians sit up later, in summer, than three or four o'clock, which is three or four hours after sunset; for their reckoning of time is from sunset at every season of the year: in winter they often sit up five or six hours.

Thus the day is usually spent by men of moderate wealth who have no regular business to attend to, or none that requires their own active superintendence. But it is the habit of the *tradesman* to repair, soon after breakfast, to his shop or warehouse, and to remain there until near sunset\*. He has leisure to smoke as much

\* A description of the shops, and a further account of the tradesmen of Cairo, will be given in another chapter, on Industry.



as he likes ; and his customers often smoke with him. To some of these he offers his own pipe (unless they have theirs with them), and a cup of coffee, which is obtained from the nearest coffee-shop. A great portion of the day he sometimes passes in agreeable chat with customers, or with the tradesmen of the next or opposite shops. He generally says his prayers without moving from his shop. Shortly after the noon-prayers, or sometimes earlier or later, he eats a light meal, such as a plate of keba'b and a cake of bread (which a boy or maid daily brings from his house, or procures in the market), or some bread and cheese or pickles, &c., which are carried about the streets for sale ; and if a customer be present, he is always invited, and often pressed, to partake of this meal. A large earthen bottle of water is kept in the shop, and replenished, whenever necessary, by a passing *sack'cha*, or water-carrier. In the evening, the tradesman returns to his house, eats his supper, and, soon after, retires to bed.

It is the general custom in Egypt for the husband and wife to sleep in the same bed, excepting among the wealthy classes, who mostly prefer separate beds. The bed is usually thus prepared in the houses of persons of moderate wealth : a mattress\*, stuffed with cotton, about six feet long, and three or four feet in width, is placed upon a low frame† : a pillow is placed for the head, and a sheet spread over this and the mattress : the only covering in summer is generally a thin blanket‡ ; and in winter, a thick quilt§, stuffed with cotton. If there be no frame, the mattress is placed upon the floor ; or two mattresses are laid one upon the other, with the sheet, pillow, &c. ; and often, a cushion of the *deewa'n*

\* *Toorra'khah.* † *Sree'r.* ‡ *Hhera'm.* § *Lehha'f.*



is placed on each side. A musquito-curtain\* is suspended over the bed by means of four strings, which are attached to nails in the wall. The dress is seldom changed on going to bed; and in winter, many people sleep with all their ordinary clothes on, excepting the gib'beh, or cloth coat; but in summer, they sleep almost, or entirely, unclad. In winter, the bed is prepared in a small closet (called *khuz'neh*): in summer, in a large room. All the bed-clothes are rolled up, in the day-time, and placed on one side, or in the closet above-mentioned. During the hottest weather, many people sleep upon the house-top, or in a *fes'hlah*, which is an uncovered apartment; but ophthalmia and other diseases often result from their thus exposing themselves to the external air at night. The most common kind of frame for the bed is made of palm-sticks; but this harbours bugs, which are very abundant in Egypt in the summer, as fleas are in the winter. These and other plagues to which the people of Egypt are exposed by night and day, have been before mentioned †. With regard to the most disgusting of them, the lice, it may here be added, that they are not always to be avoided even by the most scrupulous cleanliness: but a person who changes his linen after two or three days' wear is very seldom annoyed by these vermin; and when he is, they are easily removed, not attaching themselves to the skin: they are generally found in the linen. A house may be kept almost clear of fleas by frequent washing and sweeping; and the flies may be kept out by placing nets at the doors and windows: but it is impossible to

\* *Na'moo'see'yeh*. It is composed of muslin, or linen of an open texture, or crape, and forms a close canopy.

† In the Introduction to this work.



purify an Egyptian house from bugs, if it contain much wood-work, which is generally the case.

The male servants\* lead a very easy life, with the exception of the *sa'is*, or groom, who, whenever his master takes a ride, runs before or beside him; and this he will do in the hottest weather for hours together, without appearing fatigued. Almost every wealthy person in Cairo has a *bow'wa'b*, or door-keeper, always at the door of his house, and several other male servants. Most of these are natives of Egypt; but many Nubians are also employed as servants in Cairo and other Egyptian towns. The latter are mostly *bow'wa'bs*, and are generally esteemed more honest than the Egyptian servants; but I am inclined to think, from the opinion of several of my friends, and from my own experience, that they have acquired this reputation only by superior cunning. The wages of the male servants are very small, usually from one to two dollars (or from four to eight shillings) per month: but they receive many presents. On the *'eed* (or festival) after *Rum'ada'n*, the master generally gives, to each of his servants, part or the whole of a new suit of clothes, consisting of an *'er'ee* (a blue shirt, which is their outer dress), a *turboo'sh*, and a turban. Other articles of dress which they require during the year (excepting, sometimes, shoes) the servants are obliged to provide for themselves. Besides what their master gives them, they also receive small presents of money from his visitors, and from the tradespeople with whom he deals; particularly whenever he has made any considerable purchase. They sleep in the clothes which they wear during the day, each upon a small mat; and in winter they cover themselves with

\* *Khad'da'mee'n*, singular *khad'da'm*.



a cloak\* or blanket. In some respects, they are often familiar in their manners to their master, even laughing and joking with him : in others, they are very submissive ; paying him the utmost honour, and bearing corporal chastisement from his hand with child-like patience.

The male black slave † is treated with more consideration than the free servant ; and leads a life well suited to his lazy disposition. If discontented with his situation, he can legally compel his master to sell him. Many of the slaves in Egypt wear the Turkish military dress. They are generally the greatest fanatics in the East ; and more accustomed than any other class to insult the Christians and every people who are not of the faith which they have themselves adopted without knowing more of its doctrines than Arab children who have been but a week at school.

An acquaintance with the modern inhabitants of Egypt leads us often to compare their domestic habits with those of Europeans in the middle ages ; and, perhaps, in this comparison, the points of resemblance which we observe, with regard to the men, are more striking than the contrasts ; but the reverse will be found to be the case when we consider the state of the females.

\* See Exodus, xxii. 26, 27.

† Called *'abd*.



## CHAPTER VI.

DOMESTIC LIFE—*continued.*

QUITTING the lower apartments, where we have been long detained, I must enter upon a more presumptuous office than I have yet undertaken, which is that of a guide to the *Hhare'm*: but first I must give some account of marriage, and the marriage ceremonies.

To abstain from marrying when a man has attained a sufficient age, and when there is no just impediment, is esteemed, by the Egyptians, improper, and even disreputable. For being myself guilty of this fault (to use no harsher term), I have suffered much inconvenience and discomfort during my stay in this country, and endured many reproaches. During my former visit to Egypt, having occasion to remove from a house which I had occupied for some months in a great thoroughfare-street in Cairo, I engaged another house, in a neighbouring quarter: the lease was written, and some money paid in advance; but a day or two after, the agent of the owner came to inform me that the inhabitants of the quarter, who were mostly *shere'fs* (or descendants of the Prophet), objected to my living among them, because I was not married. He added, however, that they would gladly admit me if I would even purchase a female slave, which would exempt me from the opprobrium cast upon me by the want of a wife. I replied, that, being merely a sojourner in Egypt, I did not like



either to take a wife or female slave, whom I must soon abandon: the money that I had paid was, therefore, returned to me. In another quarter, I was less unfortunate; such heavy objections on account of my being unmarried were not raised: I was only required to promise that no persons wearing hats should come into the quarter to visit me; yet, after I had established myself in my new residence, the sheykh (or chief) of the quarter often endeavoured to persuade me to marry. All my arguments against doing so he deemed of no weight. "You tell me," said he, "that in a year or two you mean to leave this country: now, there is a young widow, who, I am told, is handsome, living within a few doors of you, who will be glad to become your wife, even with the express understanding that you shall divorce her when you quit this place; though, of course, you may do so before, if she should not please you." This young damsel had several times contrived to let me catch a glimpse of a pretty face, as I passed the house in which she and her parents lived. What answer could I return? I replied, that I had actually, by accident, seen her face, and that she was the last woman I should wish to marry, under such circumstances; for I was sure that I could never make up my mind to part with her. But I found it rather difficult to silence my officious friend.—It has been mentioned before, in the Introduction, that an unmarried man, or one who has not a female slave, is usually obliged to dwell in a weka'leh, unless he have some near relation with whom to reside; but that Franks are now exempted from this restriction.

The Egyptian females arrive at puberty much earlier than the natives of colder climates. Many marry at



the age of twelve or thirteen years; and some remarkably precocious girls are married at the age of *ten* \*; but such occurrences are not common. Few remain unmarried after sixteen years of age. An Egyptian girl at the age of thirteen, or even earlier, may be a mother. The women of Egypt are generally very prolific; but females of other countries residing here are often childless; and the children of foreigners, born in Egypt, seldom live to a mature age, even when the mother is a native. It was on this account that the emancipated Memloo'ks (or military slaves) usually adopted Memloo'ks.

It is very common among the Arabs of Egypt and of other countries, but less so in Cairo than in other parts of Egypt, for a man to marry his first cousin. In this case, the husband and wife continue to call each other "cousin;" because the tie of blood is indissoluble; but that of matrimony, very precarious. A union of this kind is generally lasting, on account of this tie of blood; and because mutual intercourse may have formed an attachment between the parties in tender age; though, if they be of the higher or middle classes, the young man is seldom allowed to see the face of his female cousin, or even to meet and converse with her, after she has arrived at or near the age of puberty, until she has become his wife.

Marriages in Cairo are generally conducted, in the case of a virgin, in the following manner; but in that of a widow, or a divorced woman, with little ceremony. Most commonly, the mother, or some other near female relation, of the youth or man who is desirous of obtaining a wife describes to him the personal and other

\* They are often betrothed two or three or more years earlier.



qualifications of the young women with whom she is acquainted, and directs his choice\*: or he employs a *kha't'beh*, or *kha'tibeh*; a woman whose regular business is to assist men in such cases. Sometimes two or more women of this profession are employed. A *kha't'beh* gives her report confidentially, describing one girl as being like a gazelle, pretty and elegant and young; and another, as not pretty, but rich, and so forth. If the man have a mother and other near female relations, two or three of these usually go with a *kha't'beh* to pay visits to several *h haree'ms*, to which she has access in her professional character of a match-maker; for she is employed as much by the women as by the men. She sometimes also exercises the trade of a *dellal'leh* (or broker) for the sale of ornaments, clothing, &c., which procures her admission into almost every *h haree'm*. The women who accompany her in search of a wife for their relation are introduced to the different *h haree'ms* merely as ordinary visitors; and as such, if disappointed, they soon take their leave, though the object of their visit is of course understood by the other party: but if they find among the females of a family (and they are sure to see all who are marriageable) a girl or young woman having the necessary personal qualifications, they state the motive of their visit, and ask, if the proposed match be not at once disapproved of, what property, ornaments, &c., the object of their wishes may possess. If the father of the intended bride be dead, she may perhaps possess one or more houses,

\* Abraham's sending a messenger to his own country to seek a wife for his son Isaac (see Genesis, xxiv.) was just such a measure as most modern Arabs would adopt under similar circumstances, if easily practicable.



shops, &c. ; and in almost every case, a marriageable girl of the middle or higher ranks has a set of ornaments of gold and jewels. The women-visitors, having asked these and other questions, bring their report to the expectant youth or man. If satisfied with their report, he gives a present to the *kha't'beh*, and sends her again to the family of his intended wife, to make known to them his wishes. She generally gives an exaggerated description of his personal attractions, wealth, &c. For instance, she will say, of a very ordinary young man, of scarcely any property, and of whose disposition she knows nothing, "My daughter, the youth who wishes to marry you is young, graceful, elegant, beardless, has plenty of money, dresses handsomely, is fond of delicacies, but cannot enjoy his luxuries alone ; he wants you as his companion ; he will give you everything that money can procure ; he is a stayer-at-home, and will spend his whole time with you, caressing and fondling you."

The parents may betroth their daughter to whom they please, and marry her to him without her consent, if she be not arrived at the age of puberty ; but after she has attained that age, she may choose a husband for herself, and appoint any man to arrange and effect her marriage. In the former case, however, the *kha't'beh* and the relations of a girl sought in marriage usually endeavour to obtain her consent to the proposed union. Very often, a father objects to giving a daughter in marriage to a man who is not of the same profession or trade as himself ; and to marrying a younger daughter before an elder\*. The bridegroom can scarcely ever obtain even a surreptitious glance at the features of his

\* See Genesis, xxix., 26.



bride, until he finds her in his absolute possession, unless she belong to the lower classes of society ; in which case, it is easy enough for him to see her face.

When a female is about to marry, she should have a *wekke'l* (or deputy) to settle the compact, and conclude the contract, for her, with her proposed husband. If she be under the age of puberty, this is absolutely necessary ; and in this case, her father, if living, or (if he be dead) her paternal grandfather, or a guardian appointed by will, or by the *Cka'dee*, performs the office of *wekke'l* : but if she be of age, she appoints her own *wekke'l*, or may even make the contract herself ; though this is seldom done.

After a youth or man has made choice of a female to demand in marriage, on the report of his female relations, or that of the *kha't'beh*, and, by proxy, made the preliminary arrangements before described with her and her relations in the *hharee'm*, he repairs with two or three of his friends to her *wekke'l*. Having obtained the *wekke'l*'s consent to the union, if the intended bride be under age, he asks what is the amount of the required *mahr* (or dowry).

The giving of a dowry is indispensable, as I have mentioned in a former chapter. It is generally calculated in *riya'ls*, of ninety *fud'dahs* (now equivalent to five pence and two fifths) each. The *riya'l* is an imaginary money ; not a coin. The usual amount of the dowry, if the parties be in possession of a moderately good income, is about a thousand *riya'ls* (or twenty-two pounds ten shillings) ; or, sometimes, not more than half that sum. The wealthy calculate the dowry in purses, of five hundred *piasters* (or, now, five pounds sterling) each ; and fix its amount at ten purses, or



more. It must be borne in mind that we are considering the case of a virgin-bride; the dowry of a widow or a divorced woman is much less. In settling the amount of the dowry, as in other pecuniary transactions, a little haggling frequently takes place: if a thousand *riya'ls* be demanded through the *wekee'l*, the party of the intended bridegroom will probably make an offer of six hundred: the former party then gradually lowering the demand, and the other increasing the offer, they at length agree to fix it at eight hundred. It is generally stipulated that two thirds of the dowry shall be paid immediately before the marriage-contract is made; and the remaining third held in reserve, to be paid to the wife in case of divorcing her against her own consent, or in case of the husband's death.

This affair being settled, and confirmed by all persons present reciting the opening chapter of the *C'koor-a'n* (the *Fa't'hhah*), an early day (perhaps the day next following) is appointed for paying the money, and performing the ceremony of the marriage-contract, which is properly called *'ackd en-nika'hh*\*. The making this contract is commonly called *ketb el-kita'b* (or the writing of the writ); but it is very seldom the case that any document is written to confirm the marriage, unless the bridegroom is about to travel to another place, and fears that he may have occasion to prove his marriage where witnesses of the contract cannot be procured. Sometimes the marriage-contract is concluded immediately after the arrangement respecting the dowry, but more generally a day or two after. On the day appointed

\* It is a common belief in Egypt, that, if any one make a marriage-contract in the month of *Mohhar'ram*, the marriage will be unhappy, and soon dissolved: wherefore, few persons do so.



for this ceremony, the bridegroom, again accompanied by two or three of his friends, goes to the house of the bride, usually about noon, taking with him that portion of the dowry which he has promised to pay on this occasion. He and his companions are received by the bride's *wekee'l*; and two or more friends of the latter are usually present. It is necessary that there be two witnesses (and those must be Moos'lims) to the marriage-contract, unless in a situation where witnesses cannot be procured. All persons present recite the *Fa't'lihah*; and the bridegroom then pays the money. After this, the marriage-contract is performed. It is very simple. The bridegroom and the bride's *wekee'l* sit upon the ground, face to face, with one knee upon the ground, and grasp each other's right hand, raising the thumbs, and pressing them against each other. A *fick'ee*\* is generally employed to instruct them what they are to say. Having placed a handkerchief over their joined hands, he usually prefaces the words of the contract with a *khoot'beh*, consisting of a few words of exhortation and prayer, with quotations from the *Ckoor-a'n* and Traditions, on the excellency and advantages of marriage. He then desires the bride's *wekee'l* to say "I betroth [or marry], to thee, my daughter [or the female who has appointed me her *wekee'l*], such a one [naming the bride], the virgin † [or the adult virgin], for a dowry of such an amount." (The words "for a dowry," &c., are sometimes omitted.) The bride's *wekee'l* having said this, the bridegroom, prompted in the same manner by the *fick'ee*, says "I accept from

\* This appellation is commonly given to a schoolmaster.

† If the bride be not a virgin, a word importing this is substituted; namely, *sey'yib*.



thee her betrothal [or marriage] to myself, and take her under my care, and bind myself to afford her my protection; and ye who are present bear witness of this." The *weke'e'l* addresses the bridegroom in the same manner a second and a third time; and each time, the latter replies as before. They then generally add, "And blessing be on the Apostles, and praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures, amen:" after which, all present again repeat the *Fa't'hah*. It is not always the same form of *khool'beh* that is recited on these occasions: any form may be used; and it may be repeated by any person: it is not even necessary; and is often altogether omitted. The contract concluded, the bridegroom sometimes (but seldom unless he be a person of the lower orders) kisses the hands of his friends and others there present; and they then remain to dinner. Each of them receives an embroidered handkerchief, provided by the family of the bride; excepting the *sick'ee*, who receives a similar handkerchief, with a small gold coin tied up in it, from the bridegroom. Before the persons assembled on this occasion disperse, they settle when the "*ley'let ed-dookh'leh*" is to be: this is the night when the bride is brought to the house of the bridegroom, and the latter, for the first time, visits her.

In general, the bridegroom waits for his bride about eight or ten days after the conclusion of the contract. Meanwhile, he sends to her, two or three or more times, some fruit, sweetmeats, &c.; and perhaps makes her a present of a shawl, or some other article of value. The bride's family are at the same time occupied in preparing for her a stock of household furniture (as *deewa'ns*, matting, carpets, bedding, kitchen-utensils, &c.) and dress. The portion of the dowry which has been paid



by the bridegroom, and generally a much larger sum (the additional money, which is often more than the dowry itself, being supplied by the bride's family), is expended in purchasing the articles of furniture, dress, and ornaments, for the bride. These articles, which are called *gaha'z*, are the property of the bride; and if she be divorced, she takes them away with her. She cannot, therefore, with truth be said to be *purchased* \*. The furniture is sent, commonly borne by a train of camels, to the bridegroom's house. Often, among the articles of the *gaha'z*, is a chair for the turban or head-dress (*koor'see el-'ema'meh*), alluded to in a former page. It is of a large size, but slight make; the bottom and back generally of cane-work; sometimes with a canopy. It is never used to sit upon. The turban, when placed upon it, is covered with a napkin of thick silk stuff, usually ornamented with gold thread. There are sometimes sent two of these chairs; one for the husband, and the other for the wife.

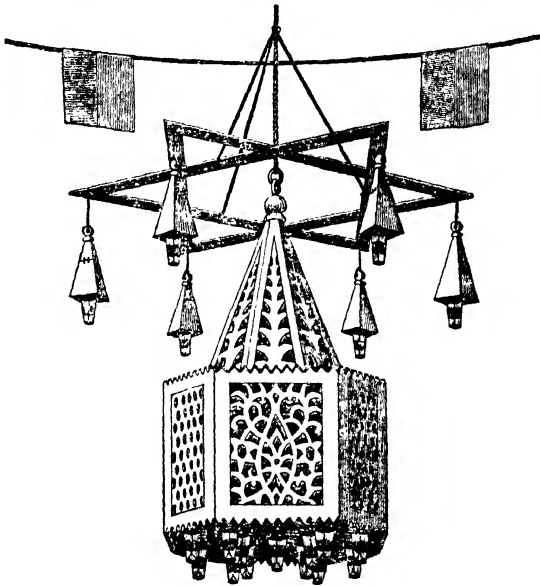
The bridegroom should receive his bride on the eve of Friday, or that of Monday †; but the former is

\* Among the peasants, however, the father, or nearest male relation of the bride, receives the dowry, and gives nothing in return but the girl, and sometimes a little corn, &c. The bridegroom, in this case, supplies everything; even the dress of the bride.

† Burckhardt has erred in stating that *Monday* and *Thursday* are the days on which the ceremonies *immediately previous* to the marriage-night are performed: he should have said *Sunday* and *Thursday*. He has also fallen into some other errors in the account which he has given of the marriage ceremonies of the Egyptians, in the illustrations of his "Arabic Proverbs" (pp. 112—118). To mention this, I feel to be a duty to myself; but one which I perform with reluctance, and not without the fear that



generally esteemed the more fortunate period. Let us say, for instance, that the bride is to be conducted to him on the eve of Friday. During two or three or more preceding nights, the street or quarter in which the bridegroom lives is illuminated with chandeliers and lanterns, or with lanterns and small lamps, suspended



Lantern, &c, suspended on the occasion of a Wedding

from cords drawn across from the bridegroom's and several other houses on each side to the houses opposite ; and several small silk flags, each of two colours, generally

Bueckhardt's just reputation for general accuracy may make my reader think that he is right in these cases, and that I am wrong. I write these words in Cairo, with his book before me, and after sufficient experience and inquiries.



red and green, are attached to other cords \*. An entertainment is also given on each of these nights, particularly on the *last* night before that on which the wedding is concluded, at the bridegroom's house. On these occasions, it is customary for the persons invited, and for all intimate friends, to send presents to his house, a day or two before the feast which they purpose or expect to attend: they generally send sugar, coffee, rice, wax candles, or a lamb: the former articles are usually placed upon a tray of copper or wood, and covered with a silk or embroidered kerchief. The guests are entertained on these occasions by musicians and male or female singers, by dancing girls, or by the performance of a *khut'meh* or a *zikh* †.

In the houses of the wealthy, the *kha't'beh* or *kha't'behs*, together with the *da'yeh* (or midwife) of the family, the *bella'neh* (or female attendant of the bath), and the nurse of the bride, are each presented, a day or two after the conclusion of the contract, with a piece of gold stuff, a Kashmeer's shawl, or a piece of striped silk, such as *yel'eks* and *shiintiya'ns* are made of; and, plac-

\* The lantern here represented, which is constructed of wood, and painted green, red, white, and blue, is called *toorei'ya* (the Arabic name of the Pleiades), and, together with the frame above, from which six lamps are suspended, and which is termed *kha'tim Sooleyma'n* (or Solomon's seal), composes what is called a *hchem'l ckan'a'dee'l*.

† These entertainments I do not here particularly describe, as it is my intention to devote the whole of a subsequent chapter to the subject of private festivities. The *khut'meh* is the recitation of the *Ckoor-a'n*; and the *zikh*, the repetition of the name of God, or of the profession of his unity, &c.: I shall have occasion to speak of both more fully in another chapter, on the periodical public festivals.



ing these over the left shoulder, and attaching the edges together on the right side, go upon asses, with two or more men before them beating kettle-drums or tabours, to the houses of all the friends of the bride, to invite the females to accompany her to and from the bath, and to partake of an entertainment given on that occasion. At every house where they call, they are treated with a repast, having sent notice the day before of their intended visit. They are called *moodna't* \*. I have sometimes seen them walking, and without the drums before them; but making up for the want of these instruments by shrill, quavering cries of joy, called *zugh'a're't* †.

On the preceding Wednesday (or on the Saturday if the wedding be to conclude on the eve of Monday), at about the hour of noon, or a little later, the bride goes in state to the bath ‡. The procession to the bath is called *zef'fet el-hamma'm*. It is headed by a party of musicians with a hautboy, or two, and drums of different kinds§. Frequently, as I have mentioned in a former chapter, some person avails himself of this opportunity to parade his young son previously to circumcision: the child and his attendants, in this case, follow next after the musicians, in the manner already described. Sometimes, at the head of the bride's party are two men who

\* From the verb *ad'na*, "he brought," &c.

† These cries of the women, which are heard on various occasions of rejoicing in Egypt and other eastern countries, are produced by a sharp utterance of the voice, accompanied by a quick, tremulous motion of the tongue.

‡ I have once seen this *zef'feh*, or procession, and a second which will be described hereafter, go forth much later, and return an hour after sunset.

§ The music is generally of a very rude kind; and the airs usually played are those of popular songs; specimens of which will be found in this work.



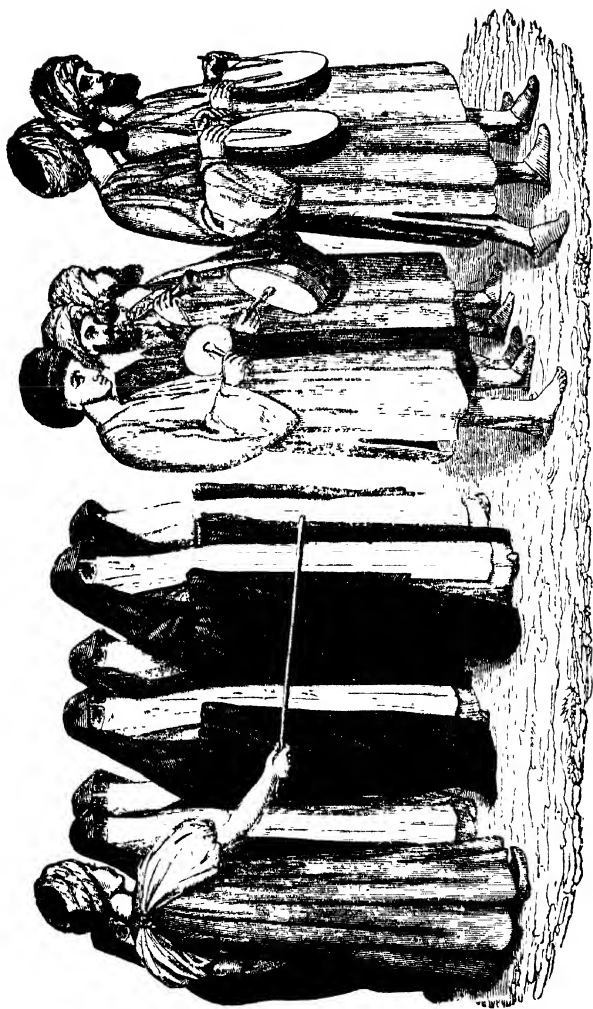
carry the utensils and linen used in the bath, upon two round trays, each of which is covered with an embroidered or a plain silk kerchief: also, a sack'eka, who gives water to any of the passengers, if asked; and two other persons, one of whom bears a *ckoom'ckoom*, or bottle, of plain or gilt silver, or of china, containing rose-water, or orange-flower-water, which he occasionally sprinkles on the passengers; and the other, a *mil'khar'ah* (or perfuming-vessel) of silver, with aloes-wood, or some other odoriferous substance burning in it: but it is seldom that the procession is thus attended. In general, the first persons among the bride's party are several of her married female relations and friends, walking in pairs; and next, a number of young virgins. The former are dressed in the usual manner, covered with the black silk *hhab'arah*: the latter have white silk *hhab'araks*, or shawls. Then follows the bride, walking under a canopy of silk, of some gay colour, as pink, rose-colour, or yellow; or of two colours, composing wide stripes, often rose-colour and yellow. It is carried by four men, by means of a pole at each corner, and is open only in front; and at the top of each of the four poles is attached an embroidered handkerchief. The dress of the bride, during this procession, entirely conceals her person. She is generally covered, from head to foot, with a red Kashmee'r shawl; or with a white or yellow shawl, though rarely. Upon her head is placed a small pasteboard cap, or crown. The shawl is placed over this, and conceals from the view of the public the richer articles of her dress, her face, and her jewels, &c., excepting one or two *ckoos'saks*\* (and sometimes other ornaments), generally of diamonds and emeralds, at-

\* For a description of these ornaments, see the Appendix.



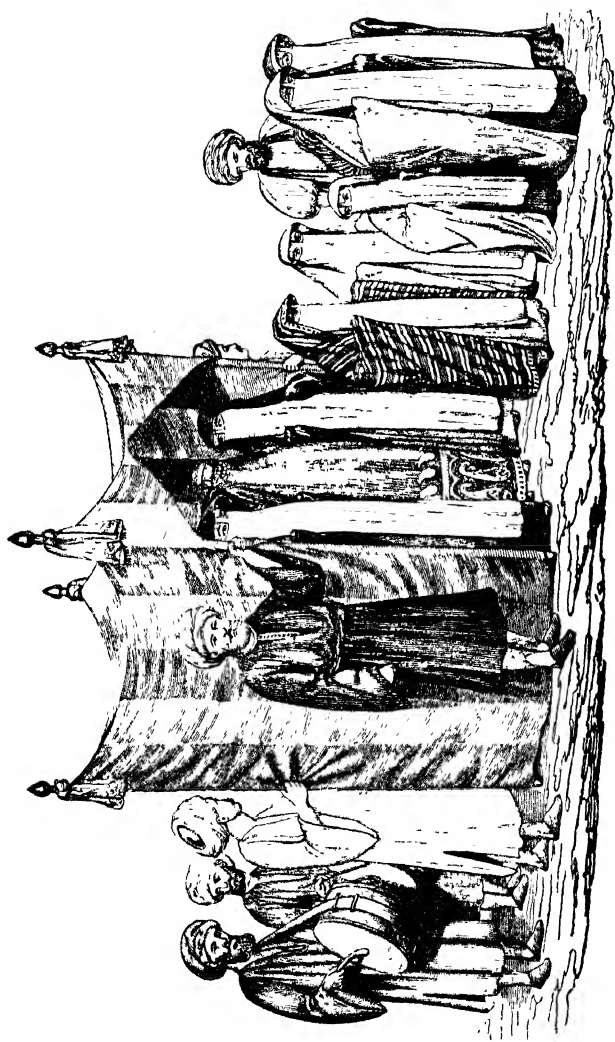






Bridal Procession (Part I)





Bridal Procession (Part II.)







tached to that part of the shawl which covers her forehead. She is accompanied by two or three of her female relations within the canopy; and often, when in hot weather, a woman, walking backwards before her, is constantly employed in fanning her, with a large fan of black ostrich-feathers, the lower part of the front of which is usually ornamented with a piece of looking-glass. Sometimes one zef'feh, with a single canopy, serves for two brides, who walk side by side. The procession moves very slowly: it is closed by a second party of musicians, similar to the first, or by two or three drummers.

In the bridal processions of the lower orders, which are often conducted in the same manner as that above described, the women of the party frequently utter, at intervals, those shrill cries of joy called zugh'a'ree't, which I have before had occasion to mention; and females of the poorer classes, when merely spectators of a zef'feh, often do the same.

The whole bath is sometimes hired for the bride and her party exclusively. They pass several hours, or seldom less than two, occupied in washing, sporting, and feasting; and frequently 'A'l'mehs (or female singers) are hired to amuse them in the bath: they then return in the same order in which they came. The expense of the zef'feh falls on the relations of the bride; but the feast is supplied by the bridegroom.

Having returned from the bath to the house of her family, the bride and her companions sup together. If 'A'l'mehs have contributed to the festivity in the bath, they, also, return with the bride, to renew their concert. Their songs are always on the subject of love, and of the joyous event which occasions their presence. After



the company have been thus entertained, a large quantity of *hhen'na* having been prepared, mixed into a paste, the bride takes a lump of it in her hand, and receives contributions (called *noockoo't*) from her guests: each of them sticks a coin (usually of gold) in the *hhen'na* which she holds upon her hand; and when the lump is closely stuck with these coins, she scrapes it off her hand upon the edge of a basin of water. Having collected in this manner from all her guests, some more *hhen'na* is applied to her hands and feet, which are then bound with pieces of linen; and in this state they remain until the next morning, when they are found to be sufficiently dyed with its deep orange-red tint. Her guests make use of the remainder of the dye for their own hands. This night is called *Ley'let el-Hhen'na*, or "the Night of the *Hhen'na*."

It is on this night, and sometimes also during the latter half of the preceding day, that the bridegroom gives his chief entertainment. *Mohhabbazee'n* (or low farce-players) often perform on this occasion before the house, or, if it be large enough, in the court. The other and more common performances by which the guests are amused have been before mentioned.

On the following day, the bride goes in procession to the house of the bridegroom. The procession before-described is called "the *zef'feh* of the bath" to distinguish it from this, which is the more important, and which is therefore particularly called *zef'fet el-'aroo'seh*, or "the *zef'feh* of the bride." In some cases, to diminish the expenses of the marriage-ceremonies, the bride is conducted privately to the bath, and only honoured with a *zef'feh* to the bridegroom's house. This procession is exactly similar to the former. The bride and



her party, after breakfasting together, generally set out a little after midday. They proceed in the same order, and at the same slow pace, as in the *zef'feh* of the bath; and, if the house of the bridegroom be near, they follow a circuitous route, through several principal streets, for the sake of display. The ceremony usually occupies three or more hours.

Sometimes, before bridal processions of this kind, two swordsmen, clad in nothing but their drawers, engage each other in a mock combat; or two *fella'hhe'e'n* cudgel each other with *nebboo'ts*, or long staves. In the procession of a bride of a wealthy family, any person who has the art of performing some extraordinary feat to amuse the spectators is almost sure of being a welcome assistant, and of receiving a handsome present \*. When the *seyd 'Om'ar*, the *Nackee'b el-Ashra'f* (or chief of the descendants of the Prophet), who was the main instrument of advancing *Mohham'mad 'Al'ee* to the dignity of *Ba'sha* of Egypt, married a daughter, about twenty-seven years since, there walked before the procession a young man who had made an incision in his abdomen, and drawn out a large portion of his intestines, which

\* One of the most common of the feats witnessed on such an occasion is the performance of a laborious task by a water-carrier, termed a *ckeiy'm*, who, for the sake of a present, and this empty title, carries a water-skin filled with sand and water, of greater weight, and for a longer period, than any of his brethren will venture to do; and this he must accomplish without ever sitting down, except in a crouching position, to rest. In the case of a bridal procession which I lately witnessed, the *ckeiy'm* began to carry his burden, a skin of sand and water weighing about two hundred pounds, at sunset of the preceding day; bore it the whole night, and the ensuing day, before and during the procession, and continued to do so till sunset.



he carried before him on a silver tray. After the procession, he restored them to their proper place, and remained in bed many days before he recovered from the effects of this foolish and disgusting act. Another man, on the same occasion, ran a sword through his arm, before the crowding spectators, and then bound, over the wound, without withdrawing the sword, several handkerchiefs, which were soaked with the blood. These facts were described to me by an eyewitness. A spectacle of a more singular and more disgusting nature used to be not uncommon on similar occasions, but is now very seldom witnessed\*. Sometimes, also, *hha'wees* (or conjurers and sleight-of-hand performers) exhibit a variety of tricks on these occasions. But the most common of all the performances here mentioned are the mock fights. Similar exhibitions are also sometimes witnessed on the occasion of a circumcision †.

The bride and her party, having arrived at the bridegroom's house, sit down to a repast. Her friends, shortly after, take their departure; leaving, with her, only her mother and sister, or other near female relations, and one or two other women; usually the *bel-la'neh*. The ensuing night is called *Ley'let ed-Dookh'leh*, or "the Night of the Entrance."

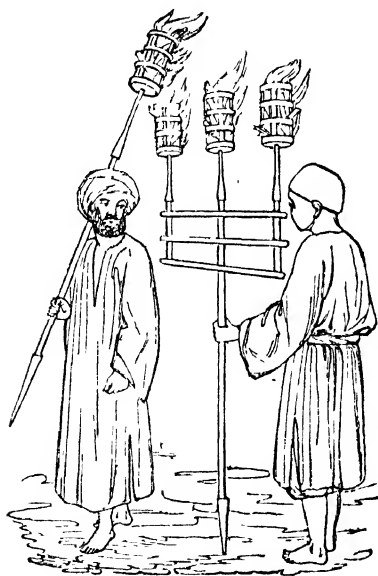
The bridegroom sits below. Before sunset, he goes to the bath, and there changes his clothes; or he merely

\* A correct description of this is given in Burckhardt's "Arabic Proverbs," pp. 115, 116.

† Grand *zef'fehs* are sometimes accompanied by a number of cars, each bearing a group of persons of some manufacture or trade performing the usual work of their craft; even such as builders, white-washers, &c.; including members of all, or almost all, the arts and manufactures practised in the metropolis.



does the latter at home, and, after having supped with a party of his friends, waits till a little before the *'esh'e* (or time of the night-prayer), or until the third or fourth hour of the night, when, according to general custom, he should repair to some celebrated mosque, such as that of the *Hhasaney'n*, and there say his prayers. If young, he is generally honoured with a *zef'feh* on this occasion : he goes to the mosque preceded by musicians with drums and one or more hautboys, and accompanied by a number of friends, and by several men bearing *mesh'als*. The *mesh'al* is a staff with a cylindrical frame of iron at the top filled with flaming wood, or having two, three, four, or five of these receptacles for



*Mesh'als.*



fire. The party usually proceeds to the mosque with a quick pace, and without much order. A second group of musicians, with the same instruments, or with drums only, closes the procession. The bridegroom is generally dressed in a *ckufta'n* with red stripes, and a red *gib'beh*, with a Kashmee'r shawl of the same colour for his turban; and walks between two friends similarly dressed. The prayers are commonly performed merely as a matter of ceremony; and it is frequently the case that the bridegroom does not pray at all, or prays without having previously performed the *woodoo'*, like *memloo'ks* who say their prayers only because they fear their master\*. The procession returns from the mosque with more order and display, and very slowly; perhaps because it would be considered unbecoming in the bridegroom to hasten home to take possession of his bride. It is headed, as before, by musicians, and two or more bearers of *mesh'als*. These are generally followed by two men, bearing, by means of a pole resting horizontally upon their shoulders, a hanging frame, to which are attached about sixty or more small lamps, in four circles, one above another; the uppermost of which circles is made to revolve; being turned round occasionally by one of the two bearers. These numerous lamps, and several *mesh'als* beside those before-mentioned, brilliantly illumine the streets through which the procession passes, and produce a remarkably picturesque effect. The bridegroom and his friends and other attendants follow, advancing in the form of an oblong ring, all facing the interior of the ring, and each bearing in his hand one or more wax candles, and sometimes a sprig of *hhen'na* or

\* Hence, this kind of prayer is called *sal'ah mem'a'lee'kee'yeh*, or "the prayer of *memloo'ks*."



some other flower, excepting the bridegroom and the friend on either side of him. These three form the latter part of the ring, which generally consists of twenty or more persons. At frequent intervals, the party stops for a few minutes; and during each of these pauses, a boy or man, one of the persons who compose the ring, sings a few words of an epithalamium. The sounds of the drums, and the shrill notes of the hautboy (which the bride hears half an hour or more before the procession arrives at the house), cease during these songs. The train is closed, as in the former case, by a second group of musicians.

In the manner above described, the bridegroom's *zef'feh* is most commonly conducted; but there is another mode, that is more respectable, called *zef'feh sa'da'tee*, which signifies "the gentlemen's *zef'feh*." In this, the bridegroom is accompanied by his friends in the same manner as before related, and attended and preceded by men bearing *mesh'als*, but not by musicians: in the place of these are about six or eight men, who, from their being employed as singers on occasions of this kind, are called *wila'd el-lÿa'lee*, or "sons of the nights." Thus attended, he goes to the mosque; and while he returns slowly thence to his house, the singers above mentioned chant, or rather sing, *moowesh'shahhs* (or lyric odes) in praise of the Prophet. Having returned to the house, these same persons chant portions of the *C'koor-a'n*, one after another, for the amusement of the guests; then, altogether, recite the opening chapter (the *Fa't hhah*); after which, one of them sings a *ckaseedeh* (or short poem) in praise of the Prophet: lastly, all of them again sing *moowesh'shahhs*. After having thus performed, they receive *noochood'l* (or con-



tributions of money) from the bridegroom and his friends.

Soon after his return from the mosque, the bridegroom leaves his friends in a lower apartment, enjoying their pipes and coffee and sherbet. The bride's mother and sister, or whatever other female relations were left with her, are above; and the bride herself, and the *bella'neh*, in a separate apartment. If the bridegroom be a youth or young man, it is considered proper that he, as well as the bride, should exhibit some degree of bashfulness: one of his friends, therefore, carries him a part of the way up to the *hharee'm*. On entering the bride's apartment, he gives a present to the *bella'neh*, and she retires. The bride has a shawl thrown over her head; and the bridegroom must give her a present of money, which is called "the price of the uncovering of the face\*," before he attempts to remove this, which she does not allow him to do without some apparent reluctance, if not violent resistance, in order to show her maiden modesty. On removing the covering, he says "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," and then greets her with this compliment: "The night be blessed," or "—is blessed:" to which she replies, if timidity do not choke her utterance, "God bless thee." The bridegroom now sees the face of his bride for the first time, and generally finds her nearly what he has been led to expect. Often, but not always, a curious ceremony is then performed. The bridegroom takes off every article of the bride's clothing excepting her shirt; seats her upon a mattress or bed, the head of which is turned towards the direction of

\* *Hhack'ck keshf el-wish'sh*. *Wish'sh* is a vulgar corruption of *wegh*, or *wegh*.



Mek'keh, placing her so that her back is also turned in that direction ; and draws forward, and spreads upon the bed, the lower part of the front of her shirt : having done this, he stands at the distance of rather less than a yard before her, and performs the prayers of two rek'ahs ; laying his head and hands, in prostration, upon the part of her shirt that is extended before her lap. He remains with her but a few minutes longer\* : having satisfied his curiosity respecting her personal charms, he calls to the women (who generally collect at the door, where they wait in anxious suspense) to raise their cries of joy, or zugh'a'ree't ; and the shrill sounds acquaint the persons below and in the neighbourhood, and often, responded by other women, spread still further the news, that he has acknowledged himself satisfied with his bride : he soon after descends to rejoin his friends, and remains with them an hour, or more, before he returns to his wife. It very seldom happens that the husband, if disappointed in his bride, immediately disgraces and divorces her : in general, he retains her, in this case, a week or more.

Having now described the most usual manner in which the marriages of virgin-brides are conducted in Cairo, I may add a few words on some of the ceremonies observed in other cases of matrimony, both of virgins and of widows or divorced women.

The daughters of the great, generally having baths in their own houses, seldom go to the public bath previously to marriage. A bride of a wealthy family, and

\* I beg to refer the reader, if he desire further details on this subject, to page 117 of Burckhardt's "Arabic Proverbs." His account might have been more complete ; but he seems to have studied to be particularly concise in this case.



her female relations and friends, if there be not a bath in her house, go to the public bath, which is hired for them exclusively, and to the bridegroom's house, without music or canopy, mounted on asses: the bride herself generally wearing a Kashmee'r shawl, in the manner of a hhab'arah. If the bridegroom or the bride's family have eunuchs, these ride before the bride; and sometimes a man runs at the head of the procession, crying "Bless ye the Prophet \*!" This man, on entering the house, throws down, upon the threshold, some leaves of the white bete (*sulck*), over which the ladies ride. The object of this act is to propitiate fortune. The same man then exclaims "Assistance from God, and a speedy victory †!"

Marriages, among the Egyptians, are sometimes conducted without any pomp or ceremony even in the case of virgins, by mutual consent of the bridegroom and the bride's family, or the bride herself; and widows and divorced women are never honoured with a zef'feh on marrying again. The mere sentence "I give myself up to thee ‡" uttered by a female to a man who proposes to become her husband (even without the presence of witnesses, if none can be easily procured) render her his legal wife, if arrived at puberty; and marriages with widows and divorced women, among the Moos'lims of Egypt, and other Arabs, are sometimes concluded in this simple manner. The dowry of such women is generally one quarter or third or half the amount of that of a virgin.

In Cairo, among persons not of the lowest order,

\* *Sal'loo 'a-n-neb'ee.* 'A-n-neb'ee is a vulgar contraction of 'al'a-n-neb'ee.

† *Ckool-a'n*, chap. lxi. ver. 13.

‡ *H'ahab'too lak nef'see.*



though in very humble life, the marriage-ceremonies are conducted in the same manner as among the middle orders. But when the expenses of such zef'fehs as I have described cannot by any means be paid, the bride is paraded in a very simple manner, covered with a shawl (generally red), and surrounded by a group of her female relations and friends, dressed in their best, or in borrowed clothes, and enlivened by no other sounds of joy than their zugh'a'ree't, which they repeat at frequent intervals.

The general mode of zef'feh among the inhabitants of the villages is different from those above-described. The bride, usually covered with a shawl, is seated on a camel; and so conveyed to the bridegroom's dwelling. Sometimes four or five women or girls sit with her, on the same camel; one on either side of her, and two or three others behind: the seat being made very wide, and usually covered with carpets or other drapery. She is followed by a group of women singing. In the evening of the wedding, and often during several previous evenings, in a village, the male and female friends of the two parties meet at the bridegroom's house, and pass several hours of the night, in the open air, amusing themselves with songs and a rude kind of dance, accompanied by the sounds of a tambourine or some kind of drum: both sexes sing; but only the women dance. I have introduced here these few words on the marriage-ceremonies of the peasantry to avoid scattering notes on subjects of the same nature. I now revert to the customs of the people of Cairo.

On the morning after the marriage, *khow'als\** or

\* A khow'al is also called *gha'ush*, plural *gheeya'sh*.



*gha'zee'yehs* (dancing men or girls) perform in the street before the bridegroom's house, or in the court \*. On the same morning also, if the bridegroom be a young man, the person who carried him up-stairs generally takes him and several friends to an entertainment in the country, where they spend the whole day. This ceremony is called *el-hooroo'beh*, or the flight. Sometimes the bridegroom himself makes the arrangements for it; and pays part of the expenses, if they exceed the amount of the contributions of his friends; for they give *noochoo't* on this occasion. Musicians and dancing-girls are often hired to attend the entertainment. If the bridegroom be a person of the lower orders, he is conducted back in procession, preceded by three or four musicians with drums and hautboys; his friends and other attendants carrying each a nosegay, as in the *zef'feh* of the preceding night; and if their return be after sunset, they are accompanied by men bearing *mesh'al*s, lamps, &c; and the friends of the bridegroom carry lighted wax candles, besides the nosegays †. Sub-

\* This performance is called the bride's *sub'a'hhee'yeh*.

† Among the peasants of Upper Egypt, the relations and acquaintances of the bridegroom and bride meet together on the day after the marriage; and while a number of the men clap their hands, as an accompaniment to a tambourine, or two, and any other instruments that can be procured, the bride dances before them for a short time. She has a head-veil reaching to her heels, and a printed cotton handkerchief completely covering her face, and wears, externally, the most remarkable of her bridal garments; (mentioned by Burckhardt, in the place before referred to, and, in some parts of Egypt, hung over the door of a peasant's house after marriage). Other women, similarly veiled, and dressed in their best, or borrowed, clothes, continue the dance about two hours, or more.



sequent festivities occasioned by marriage will be described in a later chapter.

The husband, if he can conveniently so arrange, generally prefers that his mother should reside with him and his wife; that she may protect his wife's honour, and consequently his own also. It is said that the mother-in-law is, for this reason, called *hham'ah* \*. The women of Egypt are said to be generally prone to criminal intrigues; and I fear that, in this respect, they are not unjustly accused. Sometimes a husband keeps his wife in the house of her mother, and pays the daily expenses of both. This ought to make the mother very careful with regard to expenditure, and strict as to her daughter's conduct, lest the latter should be divorced; but it is said, that, in this case, she often acts as her daughter's procuress, and teaches her innumerable tricks, by which to gain the upper hand over her husband, and to drain his purse. The influence of the wife's mother is also scarcely less feared when she only enjoys occasional opportunities of seeing her daughter: hence it is held more prudent for a man to marry a female who has neither mother nor any near relations of her own sex; and some wives are even prohibited receiving any female friends but those who are relations of the husband: they are very few, however, upon whom such severe restrictions are imposed.

For a person who has become familiar with male Moos'lin society in Cairo, without marrying, it is not so difficult as might be imagined by a stranger to obtain, directly and indirectly, correct and ample information respecting the condition and habits of the women.

\* Thus commonly pronounced, for *hhamah*, a word derived from the verb *hham'a*, "he protected, or guarded."



Many husbands of the middle classes, and some of the higher orders, freely talk of the affairs of the *hharee'm* with one who professes to agree with them in their general moral sentiments, if they have not to converse through the medium of an interpreter.

Though the women have a particular portion of the house allotted to them, the *wives*, in general, are not to be regarded as prisoners; for they are usually at liberty to go out and pay visits, as well as to receive female visitors, almost as often as they please. The slaves, indeed, being subservient to the wives, as well as to their master, or, if subject to the master only, being under an authority almost unlimited, have not that liberty. One of the chief objects of the master in appropriating a distinct suite of apartments to his women, is to prevent their being seen by the male domestics and other men without being covered in the manner prescribed by their religion. The following words of the *Ckoor-a'n* show the necessity under which a *Mohhammadan* woman is placed of concealing whatever is attractive in her person or attire from all men, excepting certain relations and some other persons. “And speak unto the believing women, that they restrain their eyes, and preserve their modesty, and discover not their ornaments, except what [necessarily] appeareth thereof: and let them throw their veils over their bosoms, and not show their ornaments, unless to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands’ fathers, or their sons, or their husbands’ sons, or their brothers, or their brothers’ sons, or their sisters’ sons, or their women, or those [captives] which their right hands shall possess, or unto such men as attend [them] and have no need [of women], or unto children:” “and let them not make a noise with their



feet, that their ornaments which they hide may [thereby] be discovered \*.” The last passage alludes to the practice of knocking together the anklets which the Arab women in the time of the Prophet used to wear ; and which are still worn by many women in Egypt.

I must here transcribe two notes of an eminent Egyptian commentator on the Ckoor-a'n, in illustration of the above extract, and inserted in Sale's translation. This I do, because they would convey an erroneous idea of modern customs with regard to the admission, or non-admission, of certain persons into the hharee'm. The first is on the above words “or their women,” which it thus explains—“That is, such as are of the Mohhammadan religion: it being reckoned by some unlawful, or, at least, indecent, for a woman who is a true believer, to uncover herself before one who is an infidel; because the latter will hardly refrain from describing her to the men: but others suppose all women in general are here excepted; for, in this particular, doctors differ.” In Egypt, and I believe in every other Mohhammadan country, it is not now considered improper for any woman, whether independent, or a servant, or a slave, a Christian, a Jewess, a Moos'lim'eh, or a pagan, to enter a Moos'lim's hharee'm.—The second of the notes above alluded to is on the words “or those captives;” and is as follows. “Slaves of either sex are included in this exception, and, as some think, domestic servants who are not slaves, as those of a different nation. It is related that Mohham'mad once made a present of a man-slave to his daughter Fa'timeh; and when he brought him to her, she had on a garment which was so



scanty, that she was obliged to leave either her head or her feet uncovered : and that the Prophet, seeing her in great confusion on that account, told her, she need be under no concern, for that there was none present but her father and her slave." Among the Arabs of the Desert this may still be the case ; but in Egypt I have never heard of an instance of an adult male slave being allowed to see the *hharee'm* of a respectable man, whether he belonged to that *hharee'm* or not ; and am assured that it is never permitted. Perhaps the reason why the man-slave of a woman is allowed this privilege by the *C'koor-a'n* is, because she cannot become his lawful wife as long as he continues her slave : but this is a poor reason for granting him access to the *hharee'm*, in such a state of society. It is remarkable that, in the verse of the *C'koor-a'n* above quoted, uncles are not mentioned as privileged to see their nieces unveiled : some think that they are not admissible, and for this reason, lest they should describe the persons of their nieces to their sons ; for it is regarded as highly improper for a man to describe the features or person of a female (as to say, that she has large eyes, a straight nose, small mouth, &c.) to one of his own sex by whom it is unlawful for her to be seen, though it is not considered indecorous to describe her in general terms, as, for instance, to say "she is a sweet girl, and set off with *kohhl* and *hhen'na*."

It may be mentioned here, as a general rule, that a man is allowed to see unveiled only his own wives and female slaves, and those females whom he is prohibited, by law, from marrying, on account of their being within certain degrees of consanguinity or family connexion, or having given him suck, or having been suckled by the



same nurse as himself\*. The high antiquity of the veil has been alluded to in the first chapter of this work. It has also been mentioned, that it is considered more necessary, in Egypt, for a woman to cover the upper and back part of her head than her face; and more requisite for her to conceal her face than most other parts of her person: for instance, a female who cannot be persuaded to unveil her face in the presence of men, will think it but little shame to display the whole of her bosom, or the greater part of her leg. There are, it is true, many women among the lower classes in this country who constantly appear in public with unveiled face; but they are almost constrained to do so by the want of a boor'eko' (or face-veil), and the difficulty of adjusting the tar'hah (or head-veil), of which scarcely any woman is destitute, so as to supply the place of the former; particularly when both their hands are occupied in holding some burden which they are carrying upon the head. When a respectable woman is, by any chance, seen with her head or face uncovered, by a man who is not entitled to enjoy that privilege, she quickly assumes or adjusts her tar'hah, and often exclaims "O my misfortune †!" or "O my sorrow ‡!" Motives of coquetry, however, frequently induce an Egyptian woman to expose her face before a man when she thinks that she may appear to do so unintentionally, or that she may be supposed not to see him. A man may also occasionally enjoy opportunities of seeing the face of an Egyptian lady when she really thinks herself unobserved; some-

\* See the chapter on Religion and Laws. Eunuchs are allowed to see the face of any woman: so, also, are young boys.

† *Ya' dakh'wet'ee*, for *da'awet'ee*.

‡ *Ya' neda'm'tee*, for *neda'metee*.



times at an open lattice, and sometimes on a house-top. Many small houses in Cairo have no apartment on the ground-floor for the reception of male visitors, who therefore ascend to an upper room; but as they go up stairs, they exclaim, several times, "*destoo'r!*" ("permission!"), or "*ya' Sa'tir!*" ("O Protector!" that is "O protecting God!"), or use some similar ejaculation, in order to warn any woman who may happen to be in the way, to retire, or to veil herself; which she does by drawing a part of her *tar'hhah* before her face, so as to leave, at most, only one eye visible. To such an absurd pitch do the Moos'lims carry their feeling of the sacredness of women, that entrance into the *tombs* of some females is denied to men; as, for instance, the tombs of the Prophet's wives and other females of his family, in the burial-ground of El-Medee'neh; into which women are freely admitted: and a man and woman they never bury in the same vault, unless a wall separate the bodies. Yet there are, among the Egyptians, a few persons who are much less particular in this respect: such is one of my Moos'lim friends here, who generally allows me to see his mother when I call upon him. She is a widow, of about fifty years of age; but, being very fat, and not looking so old, she calls herself forty. She usually comes to the door of the apartment of the *hharee'm* in which I am received (there being no lower apartment in the house for male visitors), and sits there upon the floor, but will never enter the room. Occasionally, and as if by accident, she shows me the whole of her face, with plenty of *kohhl* round her eyes; and does not attempt to conceal her diamonds, emeralds, and other ornaments; but rather the reverse. The wife, however, I am never



permitted to see; though once I was allowed to talk to her, in the presence of her husband, round the corner of a passage at the top of the stairs.

I believe that, in Egypt, the women are generally under less restraint than in any other country of the Turkish Empire; so that it is not uncommon to see females of the lower orders flirting and jesting with men in public, and men laying their hands upon them very freely. Still it might be imagined, that the women of the higher and middle classes feel themselves severely oppressed, and are much discontented with the state of seclusion to which they are subjected: but this is not commonly the case; on the contrary, an Egyptian wife who is attached to her husband is apt to think, if he allow her unusual liberty, that he neglects her, and does not sufficiently love her; and to envy those wives who are kept and watched with greater strictness.

It is not very common for an Egyptian to have more than one wife, or a concubine slave; though the law allows him *four* wives (as I have before stated), and, according to the opinion of some, as many concubine slaves as he may choose. But, though a man restrict himself to a single wife, he may change as often as he desires; and there are certainly not many persons in Cairo who have not divorced one wife, if they have been long married. The husband may, whenever he pleases, say to his wife "Thou art divorced\*:" if it be his wish, whether reasonable or not, she must return to her parents or friends. This liability to an unmerited divorce is the source of more uneasiness to many wives than all the other troubles to which they are exposed; as they may thereby be reduced to a state of great destitution:

\* *En'tee ta'lickah.*



but to others, who hope to better<sup>e</sup> their condition, it is, of course, exactly the reverse. I have mentioned, in a former chapter \*, that a man may divorce his wife twice, and each time receive her again without any ceremony; but that he cannot legally take her again after a third divorce until she has been married and divorced by another man. The consequences of a triple divorce conveyed in one sentence† are the same, unless the man and his wife agree to infringe the law, or the former deny his having pronounced the sentence; in which latter case, the woman may have much difficulty to enforce his compliance with the law, if she be inclined to do so.

In illustration of this subject, I may mention a case in which an acquaintance of mine was concerned as a witness of the sentence of divorce. He was sitting in a coffee-shop with two other men, one of whom had just been irritated by something that his wife had said or done. After a short conversation upon this affair, the angry husband sent for his wife, and, as soon as she came, said to her "Thou art trebly divorced:" then, addressing his two companions, he added "You, my brothers, are witnesses." Shortly after, however, he repented of this act, and wished to take back his divorced wife; but she refused to return to him, and appealed to the *Shari'ah Allah* (or Law of God). The case was tried at the *Mahh'kem'eh*. The woman, who was the plaintiff, stated that the defendant was her husband; that he had pronounced against her the sentence of a triple divorce; and that he now wished her to return to him, and live with him as his wife, contrary to the law, and consequently in a state of sin. The

\* On the Religion and Laws. † *En'tee ta'llickah bi-t-tela'teh*.



defendant denied that he had divorced her. "Have you witnesses?" said the judge to the plaintiff. She answered, "I have here two witnesses." These were the men who were present in the coffee-shop when the sentence of divorce was pronounced. They were desired to give their evidence; and stated that the defendant divorced his wife, by a triple sentence, in their presence. The defendant averred that she whom he divorced in the coffee-shop was another wife of his. The plaintiff declared that he had no other wife; but the judge observed to her that it was impossible she could know that; and asked the witnesses what was the name of the woman whom the defendant divorced in their presence? They answered that they were ignorant of her name. They were then asked if they could swear that the plaintiff was the woman who was divorced before them? Their reply was, that they could not swear to a woman whom they had never seen unveiled. Under these circumstances, the judge thought it right to dismiss the case; and the woman was obliged to return to her husband. She might have demanded that he should produce the woman whom he professed to have divorced in the coffee-shop; but he would easily have found a woman to play the part he required; as it would not have been necessary for her to show a marriage certificate; marriages being almost always performed in Egypt without any written contract, and sometimes even without witnesses.

It not unfrequently happens, that, when a man who has divorced his wife the third time wishes to take her again (she herself consenting to their reunion, and there being no witnesses to the sentence of divorce), he does so without conforming with the offensive law before-



mentioned. It is also a common custom for a man under similar circumstances to employ a person to marry the divorced woman on the condition of his resigning her, the day after their union, to him, her former husband, whose wife she again becomes, by a second contract ; though this is plainly contrary to the spirit of the law. A poor man (generally a very ugly person, and often one who is blind) is usually chosen to perform this office. He is termed a *Moostahhil'l*, or *Mohhal'lil*. It is often the case that the man thus employed is so pleased with the beauty of the woman to whom he is introduced on these terms, or with her riches, that he refuses to give her up ; and the law cannot compel him to divorce her, unless he act unjustly towards her as her husband ; which of course he takes good care not to do. But a person may employ a moostahhil'l without running this risk. It is the custom of many wealthy Turks, and of some of the people of Egypt, to make use of a slave, generally a black, their own property, to officiate in this character. Sometimes, a slave is purchased for this purpose ; or if the person who requires him for such a service be acquainted with a slave-dealer, he asks from the latter a present of a slave ; signifying that he will give him back again. The uglier the slave, the better. The Turks generally choose one not arrived at puberty ; which the tenets of their sect allow. As soon as the woman has accomplished her *'ed'deh* (or the period during which she is obliged to wait before she can marry again), the husband who divorced her, having previously obtained her consent to what he is about to do, introduces the slave to her, and asks her if she will be married to him. She replies that she will. She is accordingly wedded to the slave, in the presence of wit-



nesses ; and a dowry is given to her, to make the marriage perfectly legal. The slave consummates the marriage ; and thus becomes the woman's legitimate husband. Immediately after, or on the following morning, her former husband presents this slave to her as her own property, and the moment that she accepts him, her marriage with him becomes dissolved ; for it is unlawful for a woman to be the wife of her own slave ; though she may emancipate a slave, and *then* marry him. As soon as her marriage is dissolved by her accepting the gift of the slave, she may give back this slave to her husband : but it seldom happens that the latter will allow a person who has been a moostahhi'l for him to remain in his house. The wife, after this proceeding, may, as soon as she has again accomplished her 'ed'deh, become reunited to her former husband, after having been separated from him, by the necessity of her fulfilling two 'ed'dehs, about half a year, or perhaps more.

The depraving effects of this facility of divorce upon both sexes may be easily imagined. There are many men in this country who, in the course of ten years, have married as many as twenty, thirty, or more wives ; and women not far advanced in age who have been wives to a dozen or more men successively. I have heard of men who have been in the habit of marrying a new wife almost every month. A person may do this though possessed of very little property : he may choose, from among the females of the lower orders in the streets of Cairo, a handsome young widow or divorced woman who will consent to become his wife for a dowry of about ten shillings ; and when he divorces her, he need not give her more than double that sum to maintain her during her ensuing 'ed'deh. It is but just,



however, to add, that such conduct is generally regarded as very disgraceful; and that few parents in the middle or higher classes will give a daughter in marriage to a man who has divorced many wives.

Polygamy, which is also attended with very injurious effects upon the morals of the husband and the wives, is more rare among the higher and middle classes than it is among the lower orders; and it is not very common among the latter. A poor man may indulge himself with two or more wives, each of whom may be able, by some art or occupation, nearly to provide her own subsistence; but most persons of the middle and higher orders are deterred from doing so by the consideration of the expense and discomfort which they would incur. A man having a wife who has the misfortune to be barren, and being too much attached to her to divorce her, is sometimes induced to take a second wife, merely in the hope of obtaining offspring; and from the same motive, he may take a third, and a fourth; but fickle passion is the most evident and common motive both to polygamy and repeated divorces. They are comparatively very few who gratify this passion by the former practice. I believe not more than one husband among twenty has two wives.

When there are two or more wives belonging to one man, the first (that is, the one first married) generally enjoys the highest rank; and is called "the great lady\*." Hence it often happens that, when a man who has already one wife wishes to marry another girl or woman, the father of the latter, or the female herself who is sought in marriage, will not consent to the union unless the first wife be previously divorced. The women, of course, do

\* *Es-sitt el-kebee'reh.*



not approve of a man's marrying more than one wife. Most men of wealth, or of moderate circumstances, and even many men of the lower orders, if they have two or more wives, have, for each, a separate house. The wife has, or can oblige her husband to give her, a particular description of lodging\*, which is either a separate house, or a suite of apartments (consisting of a room in which to sleep and pass the day, a kitchen, and a latrina) that are, or may be made, separate and shut out from any other apartments in the same house. A fellow-wife is called *door'rah*†. The quarrels of *door'rahs* are often talked of: for it may be naturally inferred, that, when two wives share the affection and attentions of the same man, they are not always on terms of amity with each other; and the same is generally the case with a wife and a concubine slave living in the same house, and under similar circumstances‡. If the chief lady be barren, and an inferior, either wife or slave, bear a child to her husband or master, it commonly results that the latter woman becomes a favourite of the man, and that the chief wife or mistress is "despised in her eyes," as Abraham's wife was in the eyes of Hagar on the same account§. It therefore not very unfrequently happens that the first wife loses her rank and privileges; another becomes the chief lady, and, being the favourite of her husband, is treated by her rival or rivals, and by all the members and visitors of the

\* Called *mes'kin shar'ee*.

† Commonly thus pronounced, for *dur'rah*; originally, perhaps, by way of a pun; as *door'rah* is a common name for a *parrot*.

‡ The law enjoins a husband who has two or more wives to be strictly impartial to them in every respect; but compliance with its dictates, in this matter, is rare.

§ See Genesis, xvi, 4.



hharec'm, with the same degree of outward respect which the first wife previously enjoyed: but sometimes the poisoned cup is employed to remove her. A preference given to a second wife is often the cause of the first's being registered as *na'shuzeh*\*, either on her husband's or her own application at the Mahh'ken'eh. Yet many instances are known of neglected wives behaving with exemplary and unfeigned submission to their husband, in such cases, and with amiable good nature towards the favourite †.

Some wives have female slaves who are their own property, generally purchased for them, or presented to them, before marriage. These cannot be the husband's concubines without their mistress's permission, which is sometimes granted (as it was in the case of Hagar, Sarah's bondwoman); but very seldom. Often, the wife will not even allow her female slave or slaves to appear unveiled in the presence of her husband. Should such a slave, without the permission of her mistress, become the concubine of the husband, and bear him a child, the child is a slave, unless, prior to its birth, the mother be sold, or presented, to the father.

The white female slaves are mostly in the possession of wealthy Turks. The concubine slaves in the houses of Egyptians of the higher and middle classes are, gene-

\* This has been explained in the 3d chapter.

† In general, the most beautiful of a man's wives or slaves is, of course, for a time, his greatest favourite; but in many (if not most) cases, the lasting favourite is not the most handsome. The love of a Moos'lim, therefore, is not always merely sensual; nor does the relative condition and comfort of his wife, or of each of his wives, invariably depend so much on his caprice, or her own personal charms, as on her general conduct and disposition.



rally, Abyssinians, of a deep brown or bronze complexion. In their features as well as their complexions they appear an intermediate race between the negroes and white people: but the difference between them and either of the above-mentioned races is considerable. They themselves, however, think that they differ so little from the white people, that they cannot be persuaded to act as servants, with due obedience, to their master's wives; and the black (or negro) slave-girl feels exactly in the same manner towards the Abyssinian; but is perfectly willing to serve the white ladies. I should here mention, that the slaves who are termed Abyssinians are not from the country properly called Abyssinia, but from the neighbouring territories of the Gallas. Most of them are handsome. The average price of one of these girls is from ten to fifteen pounds sterling, if moderately handsome; but this is only about half the sum that used to be given for one a few years ago. They are much esteemed by the voluptuaries of Egypt; but are of delicate constitution: many of them die, in this country, of consumption. The price of a white slave-girl is usually from treble to tenfold that of an Abyssinian; and the price of a black girl, about half or two thirds, or considerably more if well instructed in the art of cookery. The black slaves are generally employed as menials\*.

Almost all of the slaves become converts to the Mohammedan faith; but, in general, they are little instructed in the rites of their new religion; and still less in its doctrines. Most of the white female slaves who

\* The white female slave is called *Ga'riyeh Bey'da*; the Abyssinian, *Ga'riyeh Hhabashee'yeh*; and the black, *Ga'riyeh So'da*.



were in Egypt during my former visit to this country were Greeks; vast numbers of that unfortunate people having been made prisoners by the Turkish and Egyptian army under Ibrahee'm Ba'sha; and many of them, males and females, including even infants scarcely able to walk, sent to Egypt to be sold. Latterly, from the impoverishment of the higher classes in this country, the demand for white slaves has been small. A few, some of whom undergo a kind of preparatory education (being instructed in music or other accomplishments, at Constantinople), are brought from Chercassia and Georgia. The white slaves, being often the only female companions, and sometimes the wives, of the Turkish grandees, and being generally preferred by them before the free ladies of Egypt, hold a higher rank than the latter in common opinion. They are richly dressed, presented with valuable ornaments, indulged, frequently, with almost every luxury that can be procured, and, when it is not their lot to wait upon others, may, in some cases, be happy; as lately has been proved, since the termination of the war in Greece, by many females of that country, captives in Egyptian hareems, refusing their offered liberty, which all of these cannot be supposed to have done from ignorance of the state of their parents and other relations, or the fear of exposing themselves to poverty. But, though some of them are undoubtedly happy, at least for a time, their number is comparatively small: most are fated to wait upon more favoured fellow-prisoners, or upon Turkish ladies, or to receive the unwelcome caresses of a wealthy dotard, or of a man who has impaired his body and mind by excesses of every kind; and, when their master or mistress becomes tired of them, or dies, are sold again (if they



have not borne children), or emancipated, and married to some person in humble life, who can afford them but few of the comforts to which they have been accustomed. The female slaves in the houses of persons of the middle classes in Egypt are generally more comfortably circumstanced than those in the hharee'ns of the wealthy: if concubines, they are, in most cases, without rivals to disturb their peace; and if menials, their service is light, and they are under less restraint. Often, indeed, if mutual attachment subsist between her and her master, the situation of a concubine slave is more fortunate than that of a wife; for the latter may be cast off by her husband in a moment of anger, by an irrevocable sentence of divorce, and reduced to a state of poverty; whereas a man very seldom dismisses a female slave without providing for her in such a manner that, if she have not been used to luxuries, she suffers but little, if at all, by the change: this he generally does by emancipating her, giving her a dowry, and marrying her to some person of honest reputation; or by presenting her to a friend. I have already mentioned, that a master cannot sell a slave who has borne him a child; and that she is entitled to her freedom on his death. It often happens that such a slave, immediately after the birth of her child, is emancipated, and becomes her master's wife: when she has become free, she can no longer lawfully supply the place of a wife unless he marry her. Many persons consider it disgraceful even to sell a female slave who has been long in their service. Most of the Abyssinian and black slave-girls are abominably corrupted by the Gella'bs, or slave-traders, of Upper Egypt and Nubia, by whom they are brought from their native countries: there are very few of the age of eight or nine years who have not suffered brutal violence; and so severely do



these children, particularly the Abyssinians, and boys as well as girls, feel the treatment which they endure from the Gella'bs, that many instances occur of their drowning themselves during the voyage down the Nile\*. The female slaves of every class are somewhat dearer than the males of the same age. Those who have not had the small-pox are usually sold for less than the others. Three days' trial is generally allowed to the purchaser; during which time, the girl remains in his, or some friend's, *hharee'm*; and the women make their report to him. Snoring, grinding the teeth, or talking during sleep, are commonly considered sufficient reasons for returning her to the dealer.—The dresses of the female slaves are similar to those of the Egyptian women.

The female servants, who are Egyptian girls or women, are those to whom the lowest occupations are allotted. They generally veil their faces in the presence of their masters, with the head-veil; drawing a part of this before the face, so that they leave only one eye and one hand at liberty to see and perform what they have to do. When a male visiter is received by the master of a house in an apartment of the *hharee'm* (the females of the family having been sent into another apartment on the occasion), he is usually, or often, waited upon by a female servant, who is always veiled.

Such are the relative conditions of the various classes in the *hharee'm*. A short account of their usual habits and employments must be added.

The wives, as well as the female slaves, are not only often debarred from the privilege of eating with the master of the family, but also required to wait upon him when he dines or sups, or even takes his pipe and coffee

\* The Gella'bs generally convey their slaves partly over the desert and partly down the river.



in the hharee/m. They frequently serve him as menials; fill and light his pipe, make coffee for him, and prepare his food, or, at least, certain dainty dishes; and, if I might judge from my own experience, I should say that most of them are excellent cooks; for, when a dish has been recommended to me because made by the wife of my host, I have generally found it especially good. The wives of men of the higher and middle classes make a great study of pleasing and fascinating their husbands by unremitting attentions, and by various arts. Their coquetry is exhibited, even in their ordinary gait, when they go abroad, by a peculiar twisting of the body\*. In the presence of the husband, they are usually under more or less restraint; and hence they are better pleased when his visits, during the day, are not very frequent or long: in his absence, they often indulge in noisy merriment.

The diet of the women is similar to that of the men, but more frugal; and their manner of eating is the same. Many of them are allowed to enjoy the luxury of smoking; for this habit is not considered unbecoming in a female, however high her rank; the odour of the tobacco which they use being very delicate. Their pipes are generally more slender than those of the men, and more ornamented; and the mouth-piece is sometimes partly composed of coral, in the place of amber. They generally make use of perfumes, such as musk, civet, &c.; and often, also, of cosmetics, and particularly of several preparations which they eat or drink with the view of acquiring what they esteem a proper degree of plumpness†: one of these preparations is extremely

\* The motion here described they term *ghoon'g*.

† The Egyptians (unlike the Mugh'reb'ees, and some other



disgusting ; being chiefly composed of mashed beetles \*. Many of them also have a habit of chewing frankincense †, and labdanum ‡, which impart a perfume to the breath. The habit of frequent ablutions renders them cleanly in person. They spend but little time in the operations of the toilet ; and, after having dressed themselves in the morning, seldom change their clothes during the day. Their hair is generally braided in the bath ; and not undone afterwards for several days.

The care of their children is the primary occupation of the ladies of Egypt : they are also charged with the superintendence of domestic affairs ; but, in most families, the husband alone attends to the household expenses. Their leisure-hours are mostly spent in working with the needle ; particularly in embroidering handkerchiefs, head-veils, &c., upon a frame called *men'seg*, with coloured silks and gold. Many women, even in the houses of the wealthy, replenish their private purses by ornamenting handkerchiefs and other things in this manner, and employing a *della'leh* (or female broker) to take them to the market, or to other *hharce'ms*, for sale. The visit of one *hharce'm* to another often occupies nearly a whole day. Eating, smoking, drinking coffee and sherbet, gossiping, and displaying their finery, are sufficient amusements to the company. On such occasions, the master of the house is never allowed to enter the *hharce'm*, unless on some particular and un-

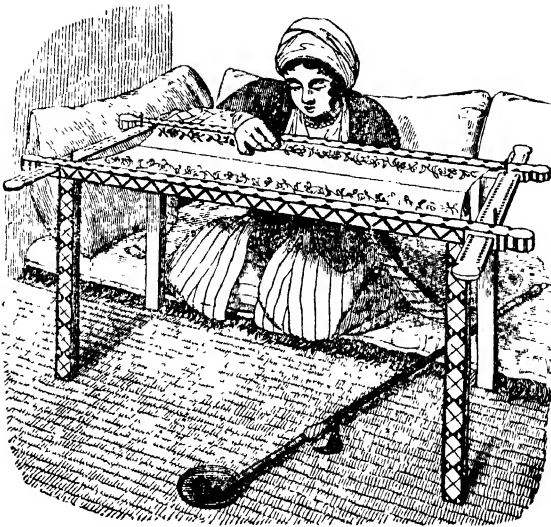
people of Africa, and of the East) do not generally admire very fat women. In his love-songs, the Egyptian commonly describes the object of his affections as of slender figure, and small waist.

\* It would seem that these insects were eaten by the Jews (see Leviticus, xi. 22) ; but we cannot suppose that they derived this custom from the Egyptians, who regarded the beetle as sacred.

† *Liba'n.*

‡ *La'din.*





The Men'seg — This is of walnut-wood, inlaid with mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell. The more common sort is of beech.

avoidable business; and in this case, he must give notice of his approach, and let the visitors have sufficient time to veil themselves, or to retire to an adjoining room. Being thus under no fear of his sudden intrusion, and being naturally of a lively and an unreserved disposition, they indulge in easy gaiety, and not unfrequently in youthful frolic. When their usual subjects of conversation are exhausted, sometimes one of the party entertains the rest with the recital of some wonderful or facetious tale. The Egyptian ladies are very seldom instructed either in music or dancing; but they take great delight in the performances of professional musicians and public dancers; and often amuse themselves and their guests, in the absence of better performers and better instruments, by beating the *dar'abook'keh* (which is a kind of



drum) and the *ta'r* (or tambourine \*); though seldom in houses so situated that many passengers might hear the sounds of festivity. On the occasion of any great rejoicing among the women (such as takes place on account of the birth of a son, or the celebration of a circumcision, or a wedding, &c.), '*Awa'lim* (or professional female singers) are often introduced; but not for the mere amusement of the women, on common occasions, in any respectable family; for this would be considered indecorous. The *Ghawa'zee* (or public dancing-girls), who exhibit in the streets with unveiled faces, are very seldom admitted into a *hharee'm*; but on such occasions as those above-mentioned, they often perform in front of the house, or in the court; though, by many persons, even this is not deemed strictly proper. The *A'la'tee'yeh* (or male musicians) are never hired exclusively for the amusement of the women; but chiefly for that of the men: they always perform in the assembly of the latter: their concert, however, is distinctly heard by the inmates of the *hharee'm* †.

When the women of the higher or middle classes go out to pay a visit, or for any other purpose, they generally ride upon asses. They sit astride, upon a very high and broad saddle, which is covered with a small carpet; and each is attended by a man on one or on each side. Generally, all the women of a *hharee'm* ride out together; one behind another. Mounted as above described, they present a very singular appearance. Being raised so high above the back of the *hhoma'r* ‡

\* Descriptions and engravings of these instruments will be given in another chapter, in the second volume.

† The performances of the *A'la'tee'yeh*, '*Awa'lim*, and *Ghawa'zee*, will be described in the second volume.

‡ Thus commonly pronounced, for *hhema'r*.





Ladies Riding.







'a'lee (or the "high ass"—for so the animal which they ride, furnished with the high saddle, is commonly called\*), they seem very insecurely seated; but I believe this is not really the case: the ass is well girthed, and sure-footed; and proceeds with a slow, ambling pace, and very easy motion. The ladies of the highest rank, as well as those of the middling classes, ride asses, thus equipped: they are very seldom seen upon mules or horses. The asses are generally hired. When a lady cannot procure a *hhoma'r* 'a'lee, she rides one of the asses equipped for the use of the men; but has a *segga'deh* (or prayer-carpet) placed over its saddle; and the inferior members of the *hharee'm*, and females of the middle orders, often do the same. Ladies never walk abroad, unless they have to go but a very short distance. They have a slow and shuffling gait, owing to the difficulty of retaining the slippers upon their feet; and, in walking, they always hold the front edges of the *hhab'arah* in the manner represented in the engraving opposite page 51 in this volume. Whether walking or riding, they are regarded with much respect in public: no well-bred man stares at them; but rather directs his eyes another way. They are never seen abroad at night, if not compelled to go out or return at that time by some pressing and extraordinary necessity: it is their usual rule to return from paying a visit before sunset. The ladies of the higher orders never go to a shop, but send for whatever they want; and there are numerous *della'leh*s who have access to the *hharee'm*s, and bring all kinds of ornaments, articles of female apparel, &c., for sale. Nor do these ladies, in general, visit the public bath, unless invited to accompany thither some of their friends; for most of them have baths in their own houses.

\* It is also called *hhoma'r mooghut'tee* (covered ass).



## CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC LIFE—*continued.*

THE domestic life of the *lower orders* will be the subject of the present chapter. In most respects, it is so simple, that, in comparison with the life of the middle and higher classes, of which we have just been taking a view, it offers but little to our notice.

The lower orders in Egypt, with the exception of a very small proportion, chiefly residing in the large towns, consist of Fella'hhee'n (or Agriculturists). Most of those in the great towns, and a few in the smaller towns and some of the villages, are petty tradesmen or artificers, or obtain their livelihood as servants, or by various labours. In all cases, their earnings are very small; barely sufficient, in general, and sometimes insufficient, to supply them and their families with the cheapest necessities of life.

Their food chiefly consists of bread (made of millet or of maize), milk, new cheese, eggs, small salted fish \*, cucumbers and melons and gourds of a great variety of kinds, onions and leeks †, beans, chick-peas, lupins, the fruit of the black egg-plant, lentils, &c., dates (both fresh and dried), and pickles. Most of the vegetables they eat in a crude state. When the maize (or Indian corn) is nearly ripe, many ears of it are plucked, and toasted or baked, and eaten thus by the peasants. Rice

\* Called *fesee'kh*.

† See Numbers, xi. 5.



is too dear to be an article of common food for the fella'-hhee'n; and flesh-meat they very seldom taste. There is one luxury, however, which most of them enjoy; and that is, smoking the cheap tobacco of their country, merely dried, and broken up. It is of a palè, greenish colour, when dried; and of a mild flavour. Though all the articles of food mentioned above are extremely cheap, there are many poor persons who often have nothing with which to season their coarse bread but the mixture called *doock'ckah*, described in a former chapter. It is surprising to observe how simple and poor is the diet of the Egyptian peasantry, and yet how robust and healthy most of them are, and how severe is the labour which they can undergo.

The women of the lower orders seldom pass a life of inactivity. Some of them are even condemned to greater drudgery than the men. Their chief occupations are the preparing of the husband's food, fetching water (which they carry in a large vessel on the head), spinning cotton, linen, or woollen yarn, and making the fuel called *gell'leh*, which is composed of the dung of cattle, kneaded with chopped straw, and formed into round flat cakes: these they stick upon the walls or roofs of their houses, or upon the ground, to dry in the sun; and then use for heating their ovens, and for other purposes. They are in a state of much greater subjection to their husbands than is the case among the superior classes. Not always is a poor woman allowed to eat with her husband. When she goes out with him, she generally walks behind him; and if there be anything for either of them to carry, it is usually borne by the wife; unless it be merely a pipe or a stick. Some women, in the towns, keep shops; and sell bread, vege-



tables, &c.; and thus contribute as much as their husbands, or even more than the latter, to the support of their families. When a poor Egyptian is desirous of marrying, the chief object of his consideration is the dowry, which is usually from about twenty *riya'ls* (or nine shillings) to four times that amount, if consisting only of money; and rather less if, as is the case throughout a great part of Egypt, it comprise certain articles of clothing: if he can afford to give the dowry, he seldom hesitates to marry; for a little additional exertion will enable him to support a wife and two or three children. At the age of five or six years, the children become of use to tend the flocks and herds; and at a more advanced age, until they marry, they assist their fathers in the operations of agriculture. The poor in Egypt have often to depend entirely upon their sons for support in their old age; but many parents are deprived of these aids, and consequently reduced to beggary, or almost to starvation. A few months ago, the Ba'sha, during his voyage from Alexandria to this city (Cairo), happening to land at a village on the bank of the Nile, a poor man of the place ran up to him, and grasped his sleeve so tightly, that the surrounding attendants could not make him quit his hold: he complained that, although he had been once in very comfortable circumstances, he had been reduced to utter destitution by having his sons taken from him in his old age as recruits for the army. The Ba'sha (who generally pays attention to personal applications) relieved him; but it was by ordering that the richest man in the village should give him a cow.

A young family, however, is sometimes an insupportable burden to poor parents. Hence, it is not a very rare occurrence, in Egypt, for children to be publicly



carried about for sale, by their mothers or by women employed by the fathers : but this very seldom happens except in cases of great distress. When a mother dies, leaving one or more children unweaned, and the father and other surviving relations are so poor as not to be able to procure a nurse, this singular mode of disposing of the child or children is often resorted to ; or sometimes an infant is laid at the door of a mosque, generally when the congregation is assembled to perform the noon-prayers of Friday ; and in this case it usually happens that some member of the congregation, on coming out of the mosque, and seeing the poor foundling, is moved with pity, and takes it home to rear in his family, not as a slave, but as an adopted child ; or, if not, it is taken under the care of some person until an adoptive father or mother be found for it. A short time ago, a woman offered for sale, to the mistress of a family with whom a friend of mine is acquainted in this city, a child a few days old, which she professed to have found at the door of a mosque. The lady said that she would take the child, to rear it for the sake of God, and in the hope that her own child, an only one, might be spared to her as a reward for her charity ; and handed, to the woman who brought the infant, ten piasters (then equivalent to a little more than two shillings) : but the offered remuneration was rejected. This shows that infants are sometimes made mere objects of traffic ; and some persons who purchase them may make them their slaves, and sell them again. I have been informed, by a slave-dealer (and his assertion has been confirmed to me by other persons), that young Egyptian girls are sometimes sold as slaves from other countries, either by a parent or by some other relation. The slave-dealer here alluded



to said, that several such girls had been committed to him for sale; and by their own consent: they were taught to expect rich dresses, and great luxuries; and were instructed to say, that they had been brought from their own country when only three or four years of age, and that they consequently were ignorant of their native language, and could speak only Arabic.

It often happens, too, that a fella'hh in a state of great poverty is induced, by the offer of a sum of money, to place his son in a situation far worse than that of ordinary slavery. When a certain number of recruits are required from a village, the sheykh of the village often adopts the plan that gives him the least trouble to obtain them, which is, to take the sons of those persons who are possessed of most property. Under such circumstances, a father, rather than part with his son, generally offers, to one of his poorer fellow-villagers, a sum equivalent to one or two pounds sterling, to procure a son of the latter as a substitute for his own; and usually succeeds; though the love of offspring prevails among the Egyptians as much as filial piety; and most parents have a great horror of parting with their children, particularly if taken for recruits, as is proved by the means to which they have recourse for the prevention of such an occurrence. There is now (in 1834) seldom to be found, in any of the villages, an able-bodied youth or young man who has not had one or more of his teeth broken out (that he may not be able to bite a cartridge), or a finger cut off, or an eye pulled out or blinded, to prevent his being taken for a recruit. Old women and others make a regular trade of going about from village to village, to perform these operations upon the boys; and the parents themselves are sometimes the operators.



But, from what has been said before, it appears that it is not always affection alone that prompts the parents to have recourse to such expedients to prevent their being deprived of their children.

The Fella'hhee'n of Egypt cannot be justly represented in a very favourable light with regard to their domestic and social condition and manners. In the worst points of view, they resemble their Bed'awee ancestors, without possessing many of the virtues of the inhabitants of the desert, unless in an inferior degree; and the customs which they have inherited from their forefathers often have a very baneful effect upon their domestic state. It has before been mentioned that they are descended from various Arab tribes who have settled in Egypt at different periods; and that the distinction of tribes is still preserved by the inhabitants of the villages throughout this country. In the course of years, the descendants of each tribe of settlers have become divided into numerous branches, and these minor tribes have distinctive appellations, which have also often been given to the village or villages or district which they inhabit. Those who have been longest established in Egypt have retained less of Bed'awee manners, and have more infringed the purity of their race by intermarriages with Copt proselytes to the Mohhammadan faith, or with the descendants of such persons: hence, they are often despised by the tribes more lately settled in this country, who frequently, in contempt, term the former "Fella'hhee'n," while they arrogate to themselves the appellation of "Arabs" or "Bed'aweess." The latter, whenever they please, take the daughters of the former in marriage, but will not give their own daughters in return; and if one of them be killed by a person of the



inferior tribe, they kill two, three, or even four, in blood-revenge. The prevalence of the barbarous Bed'awee law of blood-revenge among the inhabitants of the villages of Egypt has been mentioned in a former chapter: the homicide, or any person descended from him, or from his great-grandfather's father, is killed by any of such relations of the person whom he has slain; and when the homicide happens to be of one tribe, and the person killed of another, often a petty war breaks forth between these two tribes, and is sometimes continued, or occasionally renewed, during a period of several years. The same is also frequently the result of a trifling injury committed by a member of one tribe upon a person of another. In many instances, the blood-revenge is taken a century or more after the commission of the act which has occasioned it; when the feud, for that time, has lain dormant, and perhaps is remembered by scarcely more than one individual. Two tribes in Lower Egypt, which are called *Sa'ad* and *Hhard'm*, are most notorious for these petty wars and feuds; and hence their names are commonly applied to any two persons or parties at enmity with each other. It is astonishing that, in the present day, such acts (which, if committed in a town or city in Egypt, would be punished by the death of, perhaps, more than one of the persons concerned) should be allowed. Some other particulars respecting blood-revenge, and its consequences, have been stated in the chapter above alluded to. The avenging of blood is allowed by the *C'koor'a'n*; but moderation and justice are enjoined in its execution; and the petty wars which it so often occasions in the present age are in opposition to a precept of the Prophet, who said "If two Moos'lims contend with their



swords, the slayer and the slain will be in the fire [of Hell].”

The Fella'hhee'n of Egypt resemble the Bed'awees in other respects. When a Fella'hahah is found to have been unfaithful to her husband, in general, he, or her brother, throws her into the Nile, with a stone tied to her neck; or cuts her in pieces, and then throws her remains into the river. In most instances, also, a father or brother punishes in the same manner an unmarried daughter or sister who has been guilty of incontinence. These relations are considered as more disgraced than the husband by the crime of the woman; and are often despised if they do not thus punish her.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## COMMON USAGES OF SOCIETY.

THE Moos'lims are extremely formal and regular in their social manners; though generally very easy in their demeanour, and free in their conversation. Several of their most common usages are founded upon precepts of their religion, and distinguish them in society from all other people. Among these is their custom of greeting each other with the salutation of "Peace be on you \*!" to which the proper and general reply is "On you be peace, and the mercy of God, and his blessings †!" This salutation is never to be addressed by a Moos'lim to a person whom he knows to be of another religion ‡; nor *vice versâ*. The giving it, by one Moos'lim to another, is a duty; but one that may be omitted without sin: the returning it is absolutely obligatory: the former is a *soon'neh* ordinance; and the latter, *furd*. Should a Moos'lim, however, thus salute, by mistake, a person not of the same faith, the latter should not

\* *Es-sela'moo 'aley'koom*, or *Sela'moon 'aley'koom*, or, vulgarly, *es-sela'm 'aley'koom*.

† *'Aley'koomoo-s-sela'moo wa-rahk'matoo-lla'hi we-baraka'tooh*, or merely *'Aley'koom es-sela'm* (On you be peace!); but the longer salutation is more commonly used, in accordance with an injunction in the Ckoor-a'n, chap. iv. ver. 88.

‡ Very few Moos'lims in Egypt do so. A European traveller, not disguised by Turkish dress, often fancies that he is greeted with this salutation when it is really intended for his Moos'lim attendant.



return it; and the former, on discovering his mistake, generally revokes his salutation: so also he sometimes does if a Moos'lim refuse to return his salutation; usually saying "Peace be on *us*, and on [all] the right worshippers of God."

The chief rules respecting salutation, as dictated by the Prophet, and generally observed by modern Moos'lims, are as follow.—The person riding should first salute him who is on foot; and he who passes by, the person or persons who are sitting down or standing still; and a small party, or one of such a party, should give the salutation to a large party; and the young, to the aged\*. As it is sufficient for one party to *give*, so is it, also, for one only to *return*, the salutation. It is required, too, that a Moos'lim, when he enters a house, should salute the people of that house; and that he should do the same when he leaves it. He should always salute first, and then talk.—But, to the above rules, there are some exceptions. For instance, in a crowded city, it is not necessary (indeed it is hardly possible) to salute many of those whom one may pass; nor on a road where one meets numerous passengers. Yet it is usual for a wealthy or well-dressed person, or a venerable sheykh, or any person of distinction, to salute another who appears to be a man of rank, wealth, or learning, even in a crowded street. Among polite people, it is customary for him who gives or returns the salutation to place his right hand upon his breast, at the same time; or to touch his lips, and then his forehead, or turban, with the same hand. This action is called

\* Herodotus speaks of the respect paid in Egypt to the aged, and of the polite salutations of the Egyptians to each other. (Lib. ii. cap. 80.)



*tetymee'neh*. The latter mode of *teymee'neh*, which is the more respectful, is often performed to a person of superior rank, not only at first, with the *sela'm* (or salutation of "Peace be on you"), but also, frequently during a conversation, and in the latter case, without the *sela'm*.

A person of the lower orders, on approaching a superior, particularly if the latter be a Turk, does not always give the *sela'm*, but only performs this *tetymee'neh*; and he shows his respect to a man of high rank by bending down his hand to the ground, and then putting it to his lips and forehead, without pronouncing the *sela'm*. It is a common custom, also, for a man to kiss the hand of a superior (generally on the back only, but sometimes on the back and front), and then to put it to his forehead, in order to pay him particular respect; but in most cases, the latter does not allow this; and only touches the hand that is extended towards his: the other person, then, merely puts his own hand to his lips and forehead. To testify abject submission, in craving pardon for an offence, or interceding for another person, or begging any favour of a superior, not unfrequently the feet are kissed instead of the hand. The son kisses the hand of the father; the wife, that of her husband; and the slave, and often the free servant, that of the master. The slaves and servants of a grandee kiss their lord's sleeve, or the skirt of his clothing.

When particular friends salute each other, they join their right hands, and then each kisses his own hand, and puts it to his lips and forehead, or his forehead only, or his breast; or merely places it on his breast, without kissing it: if after a long absence, and on some other occasions, they embrace each other; each falling upon the other's neck, and kissing him on the right side



of the face or neck, and then upon the left. Another mode of salutation is very commonly practised among the lower orders, when two friends or acquaintances meet after a journey: joining their right hands, each of them compliments the other on his safety, and expresses his wishes for his welfare, by repeating, alternately, many times, the words *sel'a'ma't* and *tel'yibee'n*\*: in commencing this ceremony, which is often continued for nearly a minute before they proceed to make any particular inquiries, they join their hands in the same manner as is usually practised by us; and at each alternation of the two expressions above-mentioned, they change the position of the hands: in repeating the second word, each of the two persons turns his fingers over the thumb of the other; and in repeating the first word again, the former position is resumed.

In polite society, various other formal salutations and compliments follow the *sela'm*. To most of these, there are particular replies; or two or more different forms of reply may be used in some cases; but to return any that custom has not prescribed would be considered as a proof of ignorance or vulgarity. When a person asks his friend "How is your health†?" the latter replies "Praise be to God‡!" and it is only by the tone of voice in which he makes this answer that the inquirer can infer whether he be well or ill. When one greets the other with "*Tel'yibee'n*," the usual reply is "God bless thee§," or "God preserve thee||." A friend or

\* Meaning, "I congratulate you on your safety" and "I hope you are well."

† *Eysh hha'l'koom*.

‡ *El-hham'doo li-lla'h*.

§ *Al'lah yeba'rik* (for *yooba'rik*) *seek*.

|| *Al'lah yesel'lim'ak* (for *yoosel'lim'ak*).



acquaintance, on meeting another whom he has not seen for several days, or for a longer period, generally says, after the *sela'm*, "Thou hast made us desolate by thy absence from us \*;" and is usually answered "May God not make [us] desolate by thy absence †." The ordinary set compliments in use in Egyptian society are so numerous, that a dozen pages of this work would not suffice for the mention of those which may be heard almost every day.

When a person goes to the house of another, to pay a visit, or for any other purpose, he never enters un-awares; for this is expressly forbidden by the *C'koor-a'n†*; and particularly, if he have to ascend to an upper apartment; in which case, he should call out for permission, or announce his approach, as he goes up stairs, in the manner which I have had occasion to describe in a former chapter §. Should he find no person below, he generally claps his hands, at the door, or in the court; and waits for a servant to come down to him; or for permission to be given him to seat himself in a lower apartment, or to ascend to an upper room. On entering the room in which the master of the house is seated, he gives the *sela'm*. The master returns the salutation; and welcomes the visiter with courteousness and affability. To his superiors || or equals, he rises; and to the former, and often to the latter also, he yields the most honourable place, which is a corner of the *deewa'n*: it is that corner which is to the right of a person facing the upper end of the room. This end of the

\* *Owkhash'ten'ë.*

† *Al'lah la' yoo'hlesh min'nak.*

‡ Chap. xxiv. ver. 27.

§ Chap. vi.

|| That is, to those who are above him either in office, wealth, or religious or literary reputation.



room is called the *sudr*; and the whole of the seat which extends along it is more honourable than those which extend along the sides; each of which is called *gemb*. Visitors inferior in rank to the master of the house never seat themselves at the upper end unless invited to do so by him; and when so invited, they often decline the offered honour. His equals sit at their ease, cross-legged, or with one knee raised; and recline against the cushions: his inferiors (first, at least) often sit upon their heels; or take their place upon the edge of the *deewa'n*; or, if very much beneath him in grade, seat themselves upon the mat or carpet. In strict etiquette, the visiter should not, at first, suffer his hands to appear, when entering the room, or when seated; but should let the sleeves fall over them; and when he has taken his place on the *deewa'n*, he should not stretch out his legs, nor even allow his feet to be seen: but these rules are not often attended to, excepting in the houses of the great. Various formal compliments and salutations are given and returned after the *sela'm*; and some of them, particularly the expressions of "*ter'yibee'n*" and "*eysh hha'l'koom*," are repeated several times during the same interview.

Sometimes the visiter's own servant attends him with his pipe: the former takes his tobacco-purse out of his bosom, and gives it to the servant, who folds it up and returns it after having filled the pipe, or after the termination of the visit: otherwise, a servant of the host brings a pipe for the visiter, and one for his master; and next, a cup of coffee is presented to each\*; for "*tobacco without coffee*," say the Arabs, "*is like meat*

\* The visiter, if superior, or not much inferior in rank to the master of the house, receives his pipe and coffee before the latter.



without salt." On receiving the pipe, and the coffee, the visiter salutes the master of the house with the teymee'neh, which the latter returns; and the same is done on returning the cup to the servant. The master of the house also salutes his guest in the same manner, if the latter be not much beneath him in rank, on receiving and returning his own cup of coffee. The subjects of conversation are generally the news of the day, the state of trade, the prices of provisions, and sometimes religion and science. Facetious stories are often related; and, very frequently, persons in the best society tell tales, and quote proverbs, of the most indecent nature. In good society, people seldom talk of each other's hharee'ns; but intimate friends, and many persons who do not strictly observe the rules of good breeding, very often do so, and in a manner not always delicate. Genteel people inquire respecting each other's "houses," to ascertain whether their wives and families are well.—Visits not unfrequently occupy several hours; and sometimes (especially those of hharee'ns), nearly a whole day. The pipes are replenished, or replaced by others, as often as is necessary; for however long a visiter may stay, he generally continues smoking during the whole time; and sometimes coffee is brought again, or sherbet. The manner in which the coffee and sherbet are served has been before described. A person receives the same compliment after drinking a glass of sherbet as after taking a draught of water\*; and replies to it in the same manner.

In the houses of the rich, it used to be a common custom to sprinkle the guest, before he rose to take his leave, with rose or orange-flower water; and to perfume

\* Mentioned in chap. v.



him with the smoke of some odoriferous substance ; but of late years, this practice has become unfrequent. The scent-bottle, which is called *ckoom'ckoom*, is of plain or gilt silver, or fine brass, or china, or glass ; and has a cover pierced with a small hole. The perfuming-vessel, or *mib'khar'ah*, is generally of one or the other of the metals above mentioned : the receptacle for the burn-



*Ckoom'ckoom* and *Mib'khar'ah* —Each is about eight inches high.

ing charcoal is lined, or half filled, with gypsum-plaster ; and its cover is pierced with apertures for the emission of the smoke. The *mib'khar'ah* is used last : it is presented by a servant to the visiter or master, who wafts the smoke towards his face, beard, &c., with his right hand. Sometimes it is opened, to emit the smoke more freely. The substance most commonly used in the *mib'khar'ah* is aloes-wood \*, or benzoin †, or

\* 'Oo'd.

† Ga'wee.



cascarilla-bark \*. The wood is moistened before it is placed upon the burning coals. Ambergris † is also used for the same purpose; but very rarely, and only in the houses of persons of great wealth; as it is extremely costly. As soon as the visiter has been perfumed, he takes his leave; giving the *sela'm*, which is returned to him, and paying and receiving other set compliments. If he be a person of much higher rank than the master of the house, the latter not only rises, but also accompanies him to the top of the stairs, and then commends him to the care of God.

It is usual for a person, after paying a visit of ceremony, and on some other occasions, previously to his leaving the house, to give a small present (two or three piasters, or more, according to circumstances) to one, or to several, of the servants; and if his horse or mule or ass be waiting for him at the door, one of the servants goes out with him, to adjust his dress when he mounts: this officious person particularly expects a present. When money is thus given to a man's servants, it is considered incumbent upon their master to do exactly the same when he returns the visit.

Friends very often send presents to each other, merely for the sake of complying with common custom. When a person celebrates any private festivity, he generally receives presents from most of his friends; and it is a universal rule that he should repay the donor by a similar gift, or one of the same value, on a similar occasion. It is common for the receiver of a present, on such an event, even to express to the giver his hope that he may have to repay it on the occasion of a like festivity. An acknowledgment accompanied by such an allusion

\* *Chishr 'am'bar*.

† *'Am'bar*.



to the acquitment of the obligation imposed by the gift, which would be offensive to a generous European, is, in this country, esteemed polite. The present is generally wrapped in an embroidered handkerchief, which is returned, with a trifling pecuniary gratification, to the bearer. Fruit, laid upon leaves, and sweetmeats and other dainties, placed in a dish or on a tray, and covered with a rich handkerchief or napkin, are common presents. Very frequently, a present is given by a person to a superior with the view of obtaining something more valuable in return. This is often done by a servant to his master; and the gift is seldom refused; but often paid for immediately in money, more than equivalent. It is generally with the expectation above mentioned that an Oriental gives a present to a European. The custom of giving money to the servants of a friend, after paying him a visit, is not now so common as it was a few years since; but it is still observed by most persons on the occasion of a visit of ceremony; and particularly on the two 'eeds, or religious festivals, and by the guests at private festivities. Other customs of a similar nature, which are observed at these festivities, will be described in a subsequent chapter\*. To decline the acceptance of a present generally gives offence; and is considered as reflecting disgrace upon the person who has offered it.

There are many formal usages which are observed in Egypt not merely on the occasions of ceremonious visits, or in the company of strangers, or at the casual meetings of friends, but also in the ordinary intercourse of familiar acquaintances. When a man happens to sneeze, he says "Praise be to God †!" Each person

\* In the second volume.

† *El-hham'doo li-lla'h.*



present (servants generally excepted) then says to him "God have mercy on you \*!" to which the former generally replies "God guide us and guide you †!" or he returns the compliment in words of a similar purport. Should he yawn, he puts the back of his left hand to his mouth, and then says "I seek refuge with God from Satan the accursed ‡!" but he is not complimented on this act; as it is one which should rather be avoided; for it is believed that the devil is in the habit of leaping into a gaping mouth. For a breach of good manners, it is more common to ask the pardon of God, than that of the present company; by saying "I beg pardon of God, the Great §!" When a man has just been shaved, or been to the bath, when he has just performed the ablution preparatory to prayer, when he has been saying his prayers, or doing any other meritorious act, when he has just risen from sleep, when he has purchased or put on any new article of dress, and on many other occasions, there are particular compliments to be paid to him, and particular replies for him to make.

It is a rule with the Moos'lims to honour the right hand and foot above the left: to use the right hand for all honourable purposes; and the left, for actions which, though necessary, are unclean: to put on and take off the right shoe before the left; and to put the right foot first over the threshold of a door.

The Egyptians are extremely courteous to each other, and have a peculiar grace and dignity in their manner

\* *Rahhem'k'kom Al'la'h.*

† *Yahdee'nü wa-yahdee'koom Al'la'h.*

‡ *A'oo'z bi-lla'h min esh-sheyta'n er-ragee'm.*

§ *Astugh'fir Al'la'h el-'azee'm.*



of salutation and their general demeanour, combined with easiness of address, which seem natural to them ; being observable even in the peasants. The middle and higher classes of townspeople pride themselves upon their politeness and elegance of manners, and their wit, and fluency of speech ; and with some justice : but they are not less free in their conversation than their less accomplished fellow-countrymen. Affability is a general characteristic of the Egyptians of all classes. It is common for strangers, even in a shop, after mutual salutation, to enter into conversation with each other with as much freedom as if they were old acquaintances ; and for one who has a pipe to offer it to another who has none ; and it is not unusual, nor is it generally considered unpolite, for persons in a first, casual meeting, to ask each other's names, professions or trades, and places of abode. Lasting acquaintances are often formed on such occasions. In the middle and higher ranks of Egyptian society, it is very seldom that a man is heard to say anything offensive to the feelings of another in his company ; and the most profligate never venture to utter an expression meant to cast ridicule upon sincere religion : most persons, however, in every class, are otherwise more or less licentious in their conversation, and extremely fond of joking. They are generally very lively and dramatic in their talk ; but scarcely ever noisy in their mirth. They seldom indulge in loud laughter ; expressing their enjoyment of anything ludicrous by a smile or an exclamation.



## CHAPTER IX.

## LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE.

THE metropolis of Egypt maintains the reputation by which it has been distinguished for many centuries, of being the best school of Arabic literature, and of Mohammedan theology and jurisprudence. Polite knowledge has much declined among the Arabs universally; but least in Cairo: consequently, the fame of the professors of this city still remains unrivalled; and its great mosque, the *Az'har*, continues to attract innumerable students from every quarter of the Moos'lim world.

The Arabic spoken by the middle and higher classes in Cairo is generally inferior, in point of grammatical correctness and pronunciation, to the dialects of the *Bed'awees* of Arabia, and of the inhabitants of the towns in their immediate vicinity; but much to be preferred to those of Syria; and still more, to those of the Western Arabs. The most remarkable peculiarities in the pronunciation of the people of Egypt are the following:—The fifth letter of the alphabet is pronounced by the natives of Cairo, and throughout the greater part of Egypt, as *g* in *give*; while, in most parts of Arabia, and in Syria and other countries, it receives the sound of *j* in *joy*: but it is worthy of remark, that, in a part of southern Arabia, where, it is said, Arabic was first spoken, the former sound is given to this letter. In those parts of Egypt where this pronunciation of the



fifth letter prevails, the sound of *hem'zeh* (which is produced by a sudden emission of the voice after a total suppression) is given to the twenty-first letter, excepting by the better instructed, who give to this letter its true sound, which I represent by *ck*. In other parts of Egypt, the pronunciation of the fifth letter is the same as that of *j* in *joy*, or nearly so; and the twenty-first letter is pronounced as *g* in *give*. By all the Egyptians, in common with most other people who speak the Arabic language, the third and fourth letters of the alphabet are pronounced alike, as our *t*; and the eighth and ninth, as our *d*.—Of the peculiarities in the *structure* of the Egyptian dialect of Arabic, the most remarkable are, the annexation of the letter *shern* in negative phrases, in the same manner as the word “pas” is used in French; as *ma' yerda'sh*, for *ma' yer'da*, “he will not consent”; *ma' hood'sh te'yib*, for *ma' hod'a te'yib*, “it is not good”; the placing the demonstrative pronoun *after* the word to which it relates; as *el-beyt de'*, “this house”; and a frequent unnecessary use of the diminutive form in adjectives; as *sooghel'yir*, for *saghe'r*, “small”; *ckoorei'yib*, for *ckaree'b*, “near.”

There is not so much difference between the *literary* and *popular* dialects of Arabic as some European Orientalists have supposed. The latter may be described as the literary dialect *simplified*, principally by the omission of the final vowels and other terminations which distinguish the different cases of nouns and some of the persons of verbs. Nor is there so great a difference between the dialects of Arabic spoken in different countries as some persons, who have not held intercourse with the inhabitants of such countries, have imagined: they resemble each other more than the dialects of some



of the different counties in England. The Arabic language abounds with synonymes; and, of a number of words which are synonymous, one is in common use in one country, and another elsewhere. Thus, the Egyptian calls milk *leb'en*; the Syrian calls it *hha'el'b*: the word *leb'en* is used in Syria to denote a particular preparation of *sour* milk. Again, bread is called in Egypt *'eysht*; and in other Arab countries, *khooob'z*; and many examples of a similar kind might be adduced.—The pronunciation of Egypt has more softness than that of Syria and most other countries in which Arabic is spoken.

The literature of the Arabs is very comprehensive; but the number of their books is more remarkable than the variety. The relative number of the books which treat of religion and jurisprudence may be stated to be about one-fourth: next in number are works on grammar, rhetoric, and various branches of philology: the third in the scale of proportion are those on history (chiefly that of the Arab nation), and on geography: the fourth, poetical compositions. Works on medicine, chymistry, the mathematics, algebra, and various other sciences, &c, are comparatively very few.

There are, in Cairo, many large libraries; most of which are attached to mosques, and consist, for the greater part, of works on theology and jurisprudence, and philology. Several rich merchants, and others, have also good libraries. The booksellers of Cairo are, I am informed, only eight in number\*; and their shops are but ill stocked. Whenever a valuable book comes into the possession of one of these persons, he goes round with it to his regular customers; and is almost sure of

\* These are natives. There are also a few Turkish booksellers.



finding a purchaser. The leaves of the books are seldom sewed together; but they are usually enclosed in a cover bound with leather; and mostly have, also, an outer case (called *zurf*) of pasteboard and leather. Five sheets, or double leaves, are commonly placed together, one within another; composing what is called a *karra's*. The leaves are thus arranged, in small parcels, without being sewed, in order that one book may be of use to a number of persons at the same time; each taking a *karra's*. The books are laid flat, one upon another; and the name is written upon the front of the outer case, or upon the edge of the leaves. The paper is thick and glazed: it is mostly imported from Venice, and glazed in Egypt.



Books, and Apparatus for Writing \*.

The ink is very thick and gummy. Reeds are used instead of pens; and they suit the Arabic character much better. The Arab, in writing, places the paper upon his

\* The latter consist of the reed (*ckal'am*), the *mickut'ta'*, the penknife (*mick'shut*), the *dawa'yeh*, the *mus'tar'ah*, the *mis'ned'eh* (upon which the five articles before mentioned lie), and the scissors (*mickus's*), which, with their sheath, are placed upon the upper book.



knee, or upon the palm of his left hand, or upon what is called a *mis'ned'eh*, composed of a dozen or more pieces of paper attached together at the four corners, and resembling a thin book, which he rests on his knee. His ink and pens are contained in a receptacle called *dawa'yeh*, mentioned in the first chapter of this work, together with the penknife, and an ivory instrument (*mickul'ta'*) upon which the pen is laid to be nibbed. He rules his paper by laying under it a piece of paste-board with strings strained and glued across it (called a *mis'tar'ah*), and slightly pressing it over each string. Scissors are included among the apparatus of a writer: they are used for cutting the paper; a torn edge being considered as unbecoming. In Cairo there are many persons who obtain their livelihood by copying manuscripts. The expense of writing a *karra's* of twenty pages, quarto size, with about twenty-five lines to a page, in an ordinary hand, is about three piasters (or a little more than sevenpence of our money); but more if in an elegant hand; and about double the sum if with the vowel points, &c.

In Egypt, and particularly in its metropolis, those youths or men who purpose to devote themselves to religious employments, or to any of the learned professions, mostly pursue a course of study in the great mosque El-Az'har; having previously learned nothing more than to read, and, perhaps, to write, and to recite the Ckoor-a'n. The Az'har, which is regarded as the principal university\* of the East, is an extensive build-

\* The Az'har is not called a "university" with strict propriety; but is regarded as such by the Moos'lims, as whatever they deem worthy of the name of science, or necessary to be known, is taught within its walls. Its name has been translated, by



ing, surrounding a large, square court. On one side of this court, the side towards Mek'keh, is the chief place of prayer; a spacious portico: on each of the other three sides are smaller porticoes, divided into a number of apartments, called *riwa'cks*, each of which is destined for the use of natives of a particular country, or of a particular province of Egypt. This building is situated in the heart of the metropolis. It is not remarkable in point of architecture, and is so surrounded by houses that very little of it is seen externally. The students are called *mooga'wire'n* \*. Each *riwa'ck* has a library for the use of its members; and from these books, and the lectures of the professors, the students acquire their learning. The regular subjects of study are grammatical inflexion and syntax †, rhetoric ‡, versification §, logic ||, theology ¶, the exposition of the Ckoor-a'n \*\*, the Traditions of the Prophet ††, the complete science of jurisprudence, or rather of religious, moral, civil, and criminal law ††, which is chiefly founded on the Ckoor-a'n and the Traditions; together with arithmetic §§, as far as it is useful in matters of law. Lectures are also given on algebra |||, and on the calculations of the Mohhammadan calendar, the times of prayer, &c. ¶¶. Different books are read by students of different sects. Most of the

European travellers, "the Mosque of Flowers;" as though it had been called *Ga'mè' el-Azha'r*, instead of *El-Ga'mè' el-Az'har*, which is its proper appellation, and signifies "the Splendid Mosque." It is the first with respect to the period of its foundation, as well as in size, of all the mosques within the original limits of the city.

\* In the singular, *mooga'wir*.

† *Surf* and *nahh'oo*.

‡ *El-ma'a'nee we-l-baya'n*.

§ *El-'aroo'd*.

|| *El-mun'tick*.

¶¶ *El-towhhee'd*.

\*\* *El-tefsee'r*.

†† *El-ahh'a'dee's*.

‡‡ *El-fickh*.

§§ *El-hhesa'b*.

||| *El-gebr we-l-muocka'beleh*.

¶¶¶ *El-meecka't*.



students, being natives of Cairo, are of the Sha'fe'ee sect; and always the Sheykh, or head of the mosque, is of this sect. None of the students pay for the instruction they receive; being mostly of the poorer classes. Most of those who are strangers, having riwa'cks appropriated to them, receive a daily allowance of food, provided from funds chiefly arising from the rents of houses bequeathed for their maintenance. Those of Cairo and its neighbourhood used to receive a similar allowance; but this they no longer enjoy, excepting during the month of Rum'ada'n: for the present Ba'sha of Egypt has taken possession of all the cultivable land which belonged to the mosques; and thus the Az'har has lost the greater portion of the property which it possessed: nothing but the expenses of necessary repairs, and the salaries of its principal officers, are provided for by the government. The professors, also, receive no salaries. Unless they inherit property, or have relations to maintain them, they have no regular means of subsistence but teaching in private houses, copying books, &c.; but they sometimes receive presents from the wealthy. Any person who is competent to the task may become a professor by leave of the Sheykh of the mosque. The students mostly obtain their livelihood by the same means as the professors; or by reciting the Ckoor-a'n in private houses, and at the tombs and other places. When sufficiently advanced in their studies, some of them become cka'dees, moof'tees, ima'ms of mosques, or schoolmasters, in their native villages or towns, or in Cairo: others enter into trade: some remain all their lifetime studying in the Az'har; and aspire to be ranked among the higher 'Ool'ama. Since the confiscation of the lands which belonged to the Az'har, the number of that class of



students to whom no endowed *riwa'ck* is appropriated has very much decreased. The number of students, including all classes excepting the blind, is (as I am informed by one of the professors) about one thousand five hundred \*.

There is a chapel (called *Za'wiyet el-'Omya'n*, or the Chapel of the Blind), adjacent to the eastern angle of the *Az'har*, and one of the dependencies of that mosque, where at present about three hundred poor blind men, most of whom are students, are maintained, from funds bequeathed for that purpose. These blind men often conduct themselves in a most rebellious and violent manner: they are notorious for such conduct, and for their fanaticism. A short time ago, a European traveller entering the *Az'har*, and his presence there being buzzed about, the blind men eagerly inquired "Where is the infidel?" adding "We will kill him;" and groping about at the same time to feel and lay hold of him: they were the only persons who seemed desirous of showing any violence to the intruder. Before the accession of the present *Ba'sha*, they often behaved in a very outrageous manner whenever they considered themselves oppressed, or scanted in their allowance of food: they would, on these occasions, take a few guides, go about with staves, seize the turbans of passengers in the streets, and plunder the shops. The most celebrated of the present professors in the *Az'har*, the sheykh *El-Ckoowey'sinee* †, who is himself blind, being appointed, a few years ago, Sheykh of the *Za'wiyet el-'Omya'n*, as soon as he entered upon

\* Many persons say that their number is not less than three thousand: others, not more than one thousand. It varies very much at different times.

† Since this was written he has become Sheykh of the *Az'har*.



his office, caused every one of the blind men there to be flogged; but they rose against him, bound him, and inflicted upon him a flogging far more severe than that which they had themselves endured; and obliged him to give up his office.

Learning was in a much more flourishing state in Cairo before the entrance of the French army than it has been in later years. It suffered severely from this invasion; not through direct oppression, but in consequence of the panic which this event occasioned, and the troubles by which it was followed. Before that period, a sheykh who had studied in the Az'har, if he had only two boys, sons of a moderately rich fella'hh, to educate, lived in luxury: his two pupils served him, cleaned his house, prepared his food, and, though they partook of it with him, were his menial attendants at every time but that of eating: they followed him whenever he went out; carried his shoes (and often kissed them when they took them off) on his entering a mosque; and in every case treated him with the honour due to a prince. He was then distinguished by an ample dress, and the large formal turban called a moock'leh; and as he passed along the street, whether on foot or mounted on an ass or mule, passengers often pressed towards him to implore a short ejaculatory prayer on their behalf; and he who succeeded in obtaining this wish believed himself especially blessed: if he passed by a Frank riding, the latter was obliged to dismount: if he went to a butcher, to procure some meat (for he found it best to do so, and not to send another), the butcher refused to make any charge; but kissed his hand, and received as an honour and a blessing whatever he chose to give.—The condition of a man of this profession is now so fallen, that it



is with difficulty he can obtain a scanty subsistence, unless possessed of extraordinary talent.

The Moos'lim 'ool'ama are certainly much fettered in the pursuit of some of the paths of learning by their religion; and superstition sometimes decides a point which has been controverted for centuries. There is one singular means of settling a contention on any point of faith, science, or fact, of which I must give an instance. The following anecdote was related to me by the Ima'in of the late Moof'tee (the sheykh El-Mah'dee): I wrote it in Arabic, at his dictation, and shall here translate his words. The sheykh Mohham'mad El-Bahei' (a learned man, whom the vulgar regard as a *we'l'ee*, or especial favourite of heaven) was attending the lectures of the sheykh El-Emee'r El-Kebee'r (sheykh of the sect of the Ma'likees), when the professor read, from the Ga'mē' es-Saghee'r\* of Es-Sooyoo'tee, this saying of the Prophet "Verily El-Hhas'an and El-Hhosey'n are the two lords of the youths of the people of Paradise, in Paradise," and proceeded to remark, in his lecture, after having given a summary of the history of El-Hhas'an and El-Hhosey'n, that, as to the common opinion of the people of Musr (or Cairo) respecting the head of El-Hhosey'n, holding it to be in the famous Mesh'hed in this city (the mosque of the Hhas'aney'n), it was without foundation; not being established by any credible authority. "I was affected," says Mohham'mad El-Bahei', "with excessive grief, by this remark; since I believed what is believed by people of integrity and of intuition, that the noble head was in this Mesh'hed; and I entertained no doubt of it: but I would not oppose the sheykh El-Emee'r, on account of his high

\* A celebrated collection of the Traditions of the Prophet.



reputation and extensive knowledge. The lecture terminated, and I went away, weeping; and when night overshadowed the earth, I rose upon my feet, praying, and humbly supplicating my Lord, and betaking myself to his most noble apostle (God favour and preserve him!), begging that I might see him in my sleep, and that he would inform me in my sleep of the truth of the matter concerning the place of the noble head. And I dreamed that I was walking on the way to visit the celebrated Mesh'hed El-Hhosey'nee in Musr, and that I approached the ckool'beh\*, and saw in it a spreading light, which filled it: and I entered its door, and found a sheree'f standing by the door; and I saluted him, and he returned my salutation, and said to me 'Salute the Apostle of God (God favour and preserve him!);' and I looked towards the ckib'leh†, and saw the Prophet (God favour and preserve him!) sitting upon a throne, and a man standing on his right, and another man standing on his left: and I raised my voice, saying 'Blessing and peace be on thee, O Apostle of God!' and I repeated this several times, weeping as I did it: and I heard the Apostle of God (God favour and preserve him!) say to me 'Approach, O my son! O Mo-hham'mad!' Then the first man took me, and conducted me towards the Prophet (God favour and preserve him!) and placed me before his noble hands; and I saluted him, and he returned my salutation, and said to me 'God recompense thee for thy visit to the head of El Hhosey'n my son.' I said 'O Apostle of God, is the head of El-Hhosey'n here?' He answered 'Yes,

The saloon of the tomb.

† That is, towards the niche which marks the direction of Mek'keh.



t is here.' And I became cheerful: grief fled from me; and my heart was strengthened. Then I said 'O Apostle of God, I will relate to thee what my sheykh and my preceptor El-Emee'r hath affirmed in his lecture: and I repeated to him the words of the sheykh: and he (God favour and preserve him!) looked down, and then raised his head, and said 'The copyists are excused.' I awoke from my sleep joyful and happy: but I found that much remained of the night; and I became impatient of its length; longing for the morn to shine, that I might go to the sheykh, and relate to him the dream, in the hope that he might believe me. When the morn arose, I prayed, and went to the house of the sheykh; but found the door shut: I knocked it violently; and the porter came in alarm, asking 'Who is that?' but when he knew me, for he had known my abode from the sheykh, he opened the door to me: if it had been another person, he would have beaten him. I entered the court of the house, and began to call out 'My Master! My master!' The sheykh awoke, and asked 'Who is that?' I answered 'It is I, thy pupil, Mohham'mad El-Bahei!' The sheykh was in wonder at my coming at this time, and exclaimed 'God's absolute glory! What is this? What is the news?' thinking that some great event had happened among the people. He then said to me 'Wait while I pray.' I did not sit down until the sheykh came down to the hall; when he said to me 'Come up:' and I went up, and neither saluted him, nor kissed his hand, from the effect of the dream which I had seen; but said 'The head of El-Hhosey'n is in this well-known mesh'hed in Musr: there is no doubt of it.' The sheykh said 'What proof have you of that? If it be a true record, adduce



it.' I said 'From a book, I have none.' The sheykh said 'Hast thou seen a vision?' I replied 'Yes;' and I related it to him; and informed him that the Apostle of God (God favour and preserve him!) had acquainted me that the man who was standing by the door was 'Al'ee the son of Ab'oo Ta'lib, and that he who was on the right of the Prophet, by the throne, was Ab'oo Bekr, and that he on his left was 'Om'ar the son of El-Khatta'b; and that they had come to visit the head of the Ima'm El-Hhosey'n. The sheykh rose, and took me by the hand, and said 'Let us go and visit the Mesh'hed El-Hhosey'nee'; and when he entered the ckoob'beh, he said 'Peace be on thee, O son of the daughter of the Apostle of God! I believe that the noble head is here, by reason of the vision which this person has seen; for the vision of the Prophet is true; since he hath said 'Whoso seeth me in his sleep seeth me truly; for Satan cannot assume the similitude of my form.' Then the sheykh said to me 'Thou hast believed, and I have believed: for these lights are not illusive.'"—The above-quoted tradition of the Prophet has often occasioned other points of dispute to be settled in the same manner, by a dream; and when the dreamer is a person of reputation, no one ventures to contend against him.

The remark made at the commencement of this chapter implies that there are, in the present day, many learned men in the metropolis of Egypt; and there are some also in other towns of this country. One of the most celebrated of the modern 'Ool'ama of Cairo is the sheykh Hhas'an El-'Atta'r, who is the present sheykh of the Az'har\*. In theology and jurisprudence, he is not

\* Since the above was written, this eminent scholar has died.



so deeply versed as some of his contemporaries, particularly the sheykh El-Ckoowey'since, whom I have before mentioned; but he is eminently accomplished in polite literature\*. He is the author of an "In'sha," or an excellent collection of Arabic letters, on various subjects, which are intended as models of epistolary style. This work has been printed at Boo'la'ck. \*In mentioning its author, I fulfil a promise which he condescended to ask of me: supposing that I should publish, in my own country, some account of the people of Cairo, he desired me to state that I was acquainted with him, and to give my opinion of his acquirements.—The sheykh Mo-hham'mad Shiha'b is also deservedly celebrated as an accomplished Arabic scholar, and elegant poet. His affability and wit attract to his house, every evening, a few friends, whose pleasures, on these occasions, I sometimes participate. We are received in a small, but very comfortable room: each of us takes his own pipe; and coffee alone is presented to us: the sheykh's conversation is the most delightful banquet that he can offer us.—There are also several other persons in Cairo who enjoy considerable reputation as philologists and poets.—The sheykh 'Abd Er-Rahhma'n El-Gebur'tee, another modern author, and a native of Cairo, particularly deserves to be mentioned, as having written a very excellent history of the events which have taken place in Egypt since the commencement of the twelfth century of the Flight†. He died in 1825, or 1826, soon after my first arrival in Cairo. His family was of El-Gebur't (also called Ez-Zey'la'), a province of Abyssinia, border-

\* *'Ilm el-ad'ab.*

† The twelfth century of the Flight commenced on the 16th or 17th of October, A.D. 1688.



ing on the ocean. The Gebur'tees (or natives of that country) are Moos'lims. They have a riwa'ek (or apartment appropriated to such of them as wish to study) in the Az'har; and there is a similar provision for them at Mek'keh, and also at El-Medec'neh.

The works of the ancient Arab poets were but imperfectly understood (in consequence of many words contained in them having become obsolete) between two and three centuries, only, after the introduction of the Mohhammadan faith: it must not therefore be inferred, from what has been said in the preceding paragraph, that persons able to explain the most difficult passages of the early Arab authors are now to be found in Cairo, or elsewhere. There are, however, many in Egypt who are deeply versed in Arabic grammar, rhetoric, and polite literature; though the sciences mostly pursued in this country are theology and jurisprudence. Few of the 'ool'ama of Egypt are well acquainted with the history of their own nation; much less with that of other people.

The literary acquirements of those who do not belong to the classes who make literature their profession are of a very inferior kind. Many of the wealthy tradespeople are well instructed in the arts of reading and writing; but few of them devote much time to the pursuit of literature. Those who have committed to memory the whole, or considerable portions, of the Ckoor-a'n, and can recite two or three celebrated *ckase'dehs* (or short poems), or introduce, now and then, an apposite quotation in conversation, are considered accomplished persons. Many of the tradesmen of Cairo can neither read nor write, or can only read; and are obliged to have recourse to a friend to write their accounts, letters, &c.:



but these persons generally cast accounts, and make intricate calculations, mentally, with surprising rapidity and correctness.

It is a very prevalent notion among the Christians of Europe, that the Moos'lims are enemies to almost every branch of knowledge. This is an erroneous idea; but it is true that their studies, in the present age, are confined within very narrow limits. Very few of them study medicine, chymistry (for our first knowledge of which we are indebted to the Arabs), the mathematics, or astronomy. The Egyptian medical and surgical practitioners are mostly barbers, miserably ignorant of the sciences which they profess, and unskilful in their practice; partly in consequence of their being prohibited by their religion from availing themselves of the advantage of dissecting human bodies. But a number of young men, natives of Egypt, are now receiving European instruction in medicine, anatomy, surgery, and other sciences, for the service of the government. Many of the Egyptians, in illness, neglect medical aid; placing their whole reliance on Providence or charms. Alchymy is more studied in this country than pure chymistry; and astrology, more than astronomy. The astrolabe and quadrant are almost the only astronomical instruments used in Egypt. Telescopes are rarely seen here; and the magnetic needle is seldom employed, excepting to discover the direction of Mek'keh; for which purpose, convenient little compasses (called *ekiblee'yehs*), showing the direction of the ekib'leh at various large towns in different countries, are constructed, mostly at Dimya't: many of these have a dial, which shows the time of the 'asr at different places and different seasons. Those persons in Egypt who profess to have considerable knowledge of astronomy are generally blind to the true prin-



ciples of the science : to say that the earth revolves round the sun, they consider absolute heresy. Pure astronomy they make chiefly subservient to their computations of the calendar.

The Mohhammadan year consists of twelve lunar months; the names of which are pronounced by the Egyptians in the following manner :—

1. Mohhar'ram.
2. Suf'ar.
3. Rabee'ā el-Ow'wal.
4. Rabee'ā et-Ta'nee.
5. Gooma'd el-Ow'wal, or Gooma'da-l-Oo'la.
6. Gooma'd et-Ta'nee, or Gooma'da-t-Ta'niyeh.
7. Reg'eb.
8. Shaaba'n.
9. Rum'ada'n.
10. Show'wa'l.
11. Zoo-l-Cka'adeh, or El-Cka'adeh.
12. Zoo-l-Hheg'geh, or El-Hheg'geh \*.

Each of these months retrogrades through all the different seasons of the solar year in the period of about thirty-three years and a half: consequently, they are only used for fixing the anniversaries of most reli-

\* It is the general opinion of our chronologers, that the first day of the Mohhammadan era of "the Flight" (in Arabic, *el-Hij'rah*, or, as it is pronounced by most of the Egyptians, *el-Hig'reh*) was Friday, the 16th of July, A.D. 622: but it must be remarked, that the Arabs generally commence each month on the night on which, or on the eve\* of which, the new moon is actually seen; and this night is, in most cases, the second, but sometimes and in some places, the third, after the true period of the new moon: if, however, the moon is not seen on the second or third night, the month is commenced on the latter. The new moon of July, A.D. 622, happened between 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning of the 14th: therefore the 16th was most probably the first day of the era.



gious festivals, and for the dates of historical events, letters, &c., and not in matters relating to astronomy or the seasons. In the latter cases, the Coptic months are still in general use.

With their modern names, I give the corresponding periods of our calendar.

1. Too't commences on the 10th or 11th of September.
2. Ba'beh . . . . . 10th or 11th of October.
3. Ha'too'r . . . . . 9th or 10th of November.
4. Kayah'k (vulg. Kiya'k) 9th or 10th of December.
5. Too'beh . . . . . 8th or 9th of January.
6. Amshee'r . . . . . 7th or 8th of February.
7. Baramha't . . . . . 9th of March.
8. Burmoo'leh . . . . . 8th of April.
9. Beshen's . . . . . 8th of May.
10. Ba-oo'neh . . . . . 7th of June.
11. Ebee'b . . . . . 7th of July.
12. Mis'ra . . . . . 6th of August.

The Eiya'm en-Nes'ee (Intercalary days) five or six days, complete the year.

These months, it will be observed, are of thirty days each. Five intercalary days are added at the end of three successive years ; and six at the end of the fourth year. The Coptic leap-year immediately precedes ours : therefore the Coptic year begins on the 11th of September only when it is the next after their leap-year ; or when our next ensuing year is a leap-year ; and, consequently, after the following February, the corresponding days of the Coptic and our months will be the same as in other years. The Copts begin their reckoning from the era of Diocletian, A.D. 284.

In Egypt, and other Moos'lim countries, from sunset to sunset is reckoned as the civil day ; the night being



classed with the day which *follows* it: thus the night *before* Friday is called the night of Friday. Sunset is twelve o'clock: an hour after sunset, one o'clock: two hours, two o'clock; and so on to twelve: after twelve o'clock in the morning, the hours are again named one, two, three, and so on\*. The Egyptians wind up, and, if necessary, set their watches at sunset; or rather a few minutes after; generally when they hear the call to evening-prayer. Their watches, according to this system of reckoning from sunset, to be always quite correct, should be set every evening; as the days vary in length.

The following Table shows the times of Mohhamadan prayer†, with the apparent European time of sunset, in and near the latitude of Cairo, at the commencement of each zodiacal month.

		Sunset.		'Esh'ë.	Day-break.	Noon.	'Asr.
		Mo. T. h. m.	Eur. T. h. m.	Mo. T. h. m.	Mo. T. h. m.	Mo. T. h. m.	Mo. T. h. m.
June 21		12 0	7 4	1 34	8 6	4 56	8 31
July 22	May 21	12 0	6 53	1 30	8 30	5 7	8 43
Aug. 23	Apr. 20	12 0	6 31	1 22	9 24	5 29	9 4
Sep. 23	Mar. 20	12 0	6 4	1 18	10 24	5 56	9 24
Oct. 23	Feb. 18	12 0	5 37	1 18	11 18	6 23	9 35
Nov. 22	Jan. 20	12 0	5 15	1 22	11 59	6 45	9 41
Dec. 21		12 0	5 4	1 24	12 15	6 56	9 43

\* Consequently, the time of noon according to Mohhammadan reckoning, on any particular day, subtracted from twelve gives the apparent time of sunset, on that day, according to European reckoning.

† The periods of the 'esh'ë, daybreak, and 'asr are here given according to the reckoning most commonly followed in Egypt. (See the chapter on religion and laws.) Mo. T. denotes Mohhamadan Time: Eur. T., European Time.



A pocket almanac is annually printed at the government-press at Boo'la'ck \*. It comprises the period of a solar year, commencing and terminating with the vernal equinox ; and gives, for every day, the day of the week, and of the Mohhammadan, Coptic, Syrian, and European months ; together with the sun's place in the zodiac, and the time of sunrise, noon, and the 'asr. It is prefaced with a summary of the principal eras and feast-days of the Moos'lims, Copts, and others ; and remarks and notices relating to the seasons. Subjoined to it is a calendar containing physical, agricultural, and other notices for every day in the year ; mentioning eclipses, &c ; and comprising much matter suited to the superstitions of the people. It is the work of Yahl'ya Efen'dee, originally a Christian priest of Syria ; but now a Moos'lim.

Of geography, the Egyptians in general, and, with very few exceptions, the best instructed among them, have scarcely any knowledge : having no good maps, they are almost wholly ignorant of the relative situations of the several great countries of Europe. Some few of the learned venture to assert that the earth is a globe ; but they are opposed by a great majority of the 'Ool'ama. The common opinion of all classes of Moos'lims is, that the earth is an almost plane expanse, surrounded by the ocean, which, they say, is encompassed by a chain of mountains called *Cka'f*.

Such being the state of science among the modern Egyptians, the reader will not be surprised at finding the present chapter followed by a long account of their

\* More than a hundred books have been printed at this press : most of them for the use of the military, naval, and civil servants of the government.



superstitions; a knowledge of which is necessary to enable him to understand their character and to make due allowances for many of its faults. We may hope for, and, indeed, reasonably expect, a very great improvement in the intellectual and moral state of this people, in consequence of the introduction of European sciences, by which their present ruler has, in some degree, made amends for his oppressive sway; but it is not probable that this hope will be soon realized to any considerable extent.



## CHAPTER X.

## SUPERSTITIONS.

THE Arabs are a very superstitious people; and none of them are more so than those of Egypt. Many of their superstitions form a part of their religion; being sanctioned by the Ckoor-a'u; and the most prominent of these is the belief in *Ginn*, or Genii—in the singular, *Gin'nee*.

The Ginn are said to be of præadamite origin, an intermediate class of beings between angels and men, created of fire, and capable of assuming the forms and material fabric of men, brutes, and monsters, and of becoming invisible at pleasure. They eat and drink, propagate their species (like, or in conjunction with, human beings), and are subject to death; though they generally live many centuries. Their principal abode is in the chain of mountains called *Cka'f*, which are believed to encompass the whole earth; as mentioned at the close of the preceding chapter. Some are believers in El-Isla'm: others are infidels. Of both these classes, the Arabs stand in great awe; and for the former, they entertain a high degree of respect. It is a common custom of this people, on pouring water, &c. on the ground, to exclaim, or mutter, *destoo'r*; that is, to ask the permission, or crave the pardon, of any gin'nee that may chance to be there: for the ginn are supposed to pervade both the solid matter of the earth and the firma-



ment. They are also believed to inhabit rivers, ruined houses, wells, baths, ovens, and even the *latrina*: hence, persons, when they enter the latter place, and when they let down a bucket into a well, or light a fire, and on other occasions, say, "Permission!" or "Permission ye blessed\*!"; which words, in the case of entering the *latrina*, they sometimes preface with a prayer for God's protection against all evil spirits; but in doing this, some persons are careful not to mention the name of God after they have entered (deeming it improper in such a place), and only say, "I seek refuge with *Thee* from the evil (that is Satan) and the evil ones." These customs present a commentary on the story in "the Thousand and one Nights," in which a merchant is described as having killed a gin'nee by throwing aside the stone of a date which he had just eaten. In the same story, and in others of the same collection, a gin'nee is represented as approaching in a whirlwind of sand or dust; and it is the general belief of the Arabs of Egypt, that the *zo'ba'ah*, or whirlwind which raises the sand or dust in the form of a pillar of prodigious height, and which is so often seen sweeping across the fields and deserts of this country, is caused by the flight of one of these beings; or, in other words, that the gin'nee "rides in the whirlwind." A charm is usually uttered by the Egyptians to avert the *zo'ba'ah*, when it seems to be approaching them: some of them exclaim, "Iron, thou unlucky†!"; as genii are supposed to have a great dread of that metal: others endeavour to drive away the monster by exclaiming, "God is most great‡!". What we call a "falling star" (and which the Arabs term

\* *Destoo'r*, or *Destoo'r ya' mooba'rahee'n*.

† *Ihadee'd ya' meshoo'm*.

‡ *Allu'hoo ak'bar*.



*shiha'b*) is commonly believed to be a dart thrown by God at an evil *gin'nee*; and the Egyptians, when they see it, exclaim, "May God transfix the enemy of the faith\*!". The evil *gin'nees* are commonly termed *'Efreet's*. The existence of *'efreet's* must be believed by the Moos'lim on account of the occurrence, in the Ckoor-a'n, of these words, "An *'efreet* from among the *ginn* answered" (chap. xxvii. ver. 39); which words Sale translates "A terrible genius answered." They are generally believed to differ from the other *ginn* in being very powerful, and always malicious; but to be, in other respects, of a similar nature.

Connected with the history of the *ginn* are many fables not acknowledged by the Ckoor-a'n, and therefore not credited by the sober Moos'lins, but only by the less instructed. The latter believe that the earth was inhabited, before the time of Adam, by a race of beings differing from ourselves in form, and much more powerful; and that forty (or, according to some, seventy-two) præadamite kings, each of whom bore the name of Sooleyma'n (or Solomon), successively governed this people. The last of these Sooleyma'ns was named Ga'n Ib'n Ga'n; and from him, it is said, the *ginn* (who are also called *ga'n*) derive their name. Hence, some believe the *ginn* to be the same with the præadamite race here mentioned: but others assert that they (the *ginn*) were a distinct class of beings, and brought into subjection by the other race.

Ginnees are believed often to assume, or perpetually to wear, the shapes of cats, dogs, and other brute animals. The sheykh Khalee'l El-Meda'bighee, one of the most celebrated of the 'ool'ama of Egypt, and author

\* *Sah'am Alla'h fee 'adool eil-deen.*



of several works on various sciences, who died, at a very advanced age, during the period of my former visit to this country, used to relate the following anecdote. He had, said he, a favourite black cat, which always slept at the foot of his musquito-curtain. Once, at midnight, he heard a knocking at the door of his house ; and his cat went, and opened the hanging shutter of his window, and called, "Who is there ?" A voice replied, "I am such a one" (mentioning a strange name) "the gin'nee : open the door." "The lock," said the sheykh's cat, "has had the name [of God] pronounced upon it\*."—"Then throw me down," said the other, "two cakes of bread."—"The bread-basket," answered the cat at the window, "has had the name pronounced upon it." "Well," said the stranger, "at least give me a drink of water." But he was answered that the water-jar had been secured in the same manner ; and asked what he was to do, seeing that he was likely to die of hunger and thirst : the sheykh's cat told him to go to the door of the next house ; and went there also himself, and opened the door, and soon after returned. Next morning, the sheykh deviated from a habit which he had constantly observed : he gave, to the cat, half of the fatee'reh upon which he breakfasted, instead of a little morsel, which he was wont to give ; and afterwards said, "O my cat, thou knowest that I am a poor man : bring

\* It is a custom of many foock'aha (or learned and devout persons), and some others, to say the *bismil'lah* (In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful) on locking a door, covering bread, laying down their clothes at night, and on other occasions ; and this, they believe, protects their property from genii. The thing over which the *bismil'lah* has been pronounced is termed *moosem'mee* (for *moosem'ma*) : *'aley'h*.



me, then, a little gold:" upon which words, the cat immediately disappeared, and he saw it no more.—Ridiculous as stories of this kind really are, it is impossible, without relating one or more, to convey a just notion of the opinions of the people whom I am attempting to describe.

It is commonly affirmed, that malicious or disturbed genii very often station themselves on the roofs, or at the windows, of houses in Cairo, and other towns of Egypt, and throw bricks and stones down into the streets and courts. A few days ago, I was told of a case of this kind, which had alarmed the people in the principal street of the metropolis for a whole week; many bricks having been thrown down from some of the houses every day during this period; but nobody killed or wounded. I went to the scene of these pretended pranks of the genii, to witness them, and to make inquiries on the subject; but on my arrival there I was told that the *regm* (that is, the throwing) had ceased. I found no one who denied the throwing down of the bricks, or doubted that it was the work of genii; and the general remark, on mentioning the subject, was "God avert from us their evil doings!"

One of my friends observed to me, on this occasion, that he had met with some Englishmen who disbelieved in the existence of genii; but he concluded that they had never witnessed a public performance, though common in their country, of which he had since heard, called *koomed'yeh* (or comedy); by which term he meant to include all theatrical performances. Addressing one of his countrymen, and appealing to me for the confirmation of his words, he then said—"An Algerine, a short time ago, gave me an account of a spectacle of



this kind which he had seen in London.”—Here his countryman interrupted him, by asking, “Is not England in London? or is London a town in England?”—My friend, with diffidence, and looking to me, answered that London was the metropolis of England; and then resumed the subject of the theatre.—“The house,” said he, “in which the spectacle was exhibited cannot be described: it was of a round form, with many benches on the floor, and closets all round, in rows, one above another, in which people of the higher classes sat; and there was a large square aperture, closed with a curtain. When the house was full of people, who paid large sums of money to be admitted, it suddenly became very dark: it was at night; and the house had been lighted up with a great many lamps; but these became almost entirely extinguished, all at the same time, without being touched by any body. Then, the great curtain was drawn up: they heard the roaring of the sea and wind; and indistinctly perceived, through the gloom, the waves rising and foaming, and lashing the shore. Presently, a tremendous peal of thunder was heard; after a flash of lightning had clearly shown to the spectators the agitated sea: and then there fell a heavy shower of real rain. Soon after, the day broke; the sea became more plainly visible; and two ships were seen in the distance: they approached, and fought each other, firing their cannons; and a variety of other extraordinary scenes were afterwards exhibited. “Now it is evident,” added my friend, “that such wonders must have been the works of genii, or at least performed by their assistance.”—He could not be convinced of his error by my explanations of these phenomena.

During the month of Rum’ada’n, the genii, it is said,



are confined in prison; and hence, on the eve of the festival which follows that month, some of the women of Egypt, with the view of preventing these objects of dread from entering their houses, sprinkle salt upon the floors of the apartments; saying, as they do it, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful."

A curious relic of ancient Egyptian superstition must here be mentioned. It is believed that each quarter in Cairo has its peculiar guardian-genius, or Agathodæmon, which has the form of a serpent.

The ancient tombs of Egypt, and the dark recesses of the temples, are commonly believed, by the people of this country, to be inhabited by 'efree'ts. I found it impossible to persuade one of my servants to enter the Great Pyramid with me, from his having this idea. Many of the Arabs ascribe the erection of the Pyramids, and all the most stupendous remains of antiquity in Egypt, to Ga'n Ib'n Ga'n, and his servants, the ginn; conceiving it impossible that they could have been raised by human hands.

The term 'efree't is commonly applied rather to an evil gin'nee than any other being; but the ghosts of dead persons are also called by this name; and many absurd stories are related of them; and great are the fears which they inspire. There are some persons, however, who hold them in no degree of dread.—I had once a humorous cook, who was somewhat addicted to the intoxicating hhashee'sh: soon after he had entered my service, I heard him, one evening, muttering and exclaiming, on the stairs, as if in surprise at some event; and then politely saying, "But why are you sitting here in the draught?—Do me the favour to come up into the kitchen, and amuse me with your conversation a



little:" the civil address, not being answered, was repeated and varied several times; till I called out to the man, and asked him to whom he was speaking. "The 'efree't of a Turkish soldier," he replied, "is sitting on the stairs, smoking his pipe, and refuses to move: he came up from the well below: pray step and see him." On my going to the stairs, and telling the servant that I could see nothing, he only remarked that it was because I had a clear conscience. He was told, afterwards, that the house had long been haunted; but asserted that he had not been previously informed of the supposed cause; which was the fact of a Turkish soldier having been murdered there. My cook professed to see this 'efree't frequently after.

The existence of *Ghool's* likewise obtains almost universal credence among the modern Egyptians, in common with several other Eastern nations. These beings are said to appear in the forms of various animals, and in many monstrous shapes; to haunt burial-grounds, and other sequestered spots; to feed upon dead bodies; and to kill and devour every human creature who has the misfortune to fall in their way. Hence, the term "*ghoo'l*" is applied, in general, to any cannibal.

That fancies such as these should exist in the minds of a people so ignorant as those who are the subject of these pages cannot reasonably excite our surprise. But the Egyptians pay a superstitious reverence not to imaginary beings alone: they extend it to certain individuals of their own species; and often to those who are justly the least entitled to such respect\*. An *idiot* or a *fool* is vulgarly regarded by them as a being whose mind is in heaven, while his grosser part mingles

\* As is the case also in Switzerland.



among ordinary mortals; consequently, he is considered an especial favourite of heaven. Whatever enormities a reputed saint may commit (and there are many who are constantly infringing precepts of their religion), such acts do not affect his fame for sanctity; for they are considered as the results of his soul, or reasoning faculties, being wholly absorbed in devotion; so that his passions are left without control. Lunatics who are dangerous to society are kept in confinement; but those who are harmless are generally regarded as saints. Most of the reputed saints of Egypt are either lunatics or idiots or impostors. Some of them go about perfectly naked, and are so highly venerated, that the women, instead of avoiding them, sometimes suffer these wretches to take any liberty with them in a public street; and, by the lower orders, are not considered as disgraced by such actions, which, however, are of very rare occurrence. Others are seen clad in a cloak or long coat composed of patches of various coloured cloths, which is called a *dilk*, adorned with numerous strings of beads, wearing a ragged turban, and bearing a staff with shreds of cloth of various colours attached to the top. Some of them eat straw, or a mixture of chopped straw and broken glass; and attract observation by a variety of absurd actions. During my first visit to this country, I often met, in the streets of Cairo, a deformed man, almost naked, with long matted hair, and riding upon an ass, led by another man. On these occasions, he always stopped his beast directly before me, so as to intercept my way, recited the Fa't'hahah (or opening chapter of the Ckoor-a'n), and then held out his hand for an alms. The first time that he thus crossed me, I endeavoured to avoid him;



but a person passing by remonstrated with me, observing that the man before me was a saint, and that I ought to respect him, and comply with his demand, lest some misfortune should befall me. Men of this class are supported by alms, which they often receive without asking for them. A reputed saint is commonly called *sheykh*, *moora'bit*, or *wel'ee*. If affected with lunacy or idiocy, or of weak intellect, he is also, and more properly, termed *megzoo'b*, or *mesloo'b*. *Wel'ee* is an appellation correctly given only to an eminent and very devout saint; and signifies "a favourite of heaven;" but it is so commonly applied to real or pretended idiots, that some wit has given it a new interpretation, as equivalent to *belee'd*, which means "a fool" or "simpleton;" remarking that these two terms are equivalent both in sense and in the numerical value of the letters composing them: for *wel'ee* is written with the letters *wa'oo*, *la'm*, and *ye'*, of which the numerical values are 6, 30, and 10, or, together, 46; and *belee'd* is written with *be'*, *la'm*, *ye'*, and *da'l*, which are 2, 30, 10, and 4, or, added together, 46. A simpleton is often jestingly called a *wel'ee*.

The Moos'lims of Egypt, in common with those of other countries, entertain very curious superstitions respecting the persons whom they call *wel'ees*. I have often endeavoured to obtain information on the most mysterious of these superstitions; and have generally been answered, "You are meddling with the matters of the *tare'ekah*," or the religious course of the *dur-wee'shes*; but I have been freely acquainted with the general opinions on these subjects; and such are perhaps all that might be required to be stated in a work like the present: I shall, however, also relate what I



have been told by learned persons, and by *durweeshes*, in elucidation of the popular belief.

In the first place, if a person were to express a doubt as to the existence of true *wel'ees*, he would be branded with infidelity; and the following passage of the *Ckoor-a'n* would be adduced to condemn him: "Are not the favourites\* of God those upon whom no fear shall come, and who shall not be grieved†?" This is considered as sufficient to prove that there is a class of persons distinguished above ordinary human beings. The question then suggests itself, "Who, or of what description, are these persons?" and we are answered, "They are persons wholly devoted to God, and possessed of extraordinary faith; and, according to their degree of faith, endowed with the power of performing miracles‡."

The most holy of the *wel'ees* is termed the *Ckootb*; or, according to some persons, there are two who have this title; and again, according to others, four. The term *ckootb* signifies an *axis*; and hence is applied to a *wel'ee* who rules over others: they depending upon him, and being subservient to him. For the same reason it is applied to temporal rulers, or any person of high authority. The opinion that there are *four* *ckootbs*, I am told, is a vulgar error, originating from the frequent mention of "the four *ckootbs*," by which expression are meant the founders of the four most celebrated orders of *durweeshes* (the *Rif'a'ee'yeh*, *Cka'diree'yeh*, *Ahhmedee'yeh*, and *Bara'himeh*); each of whom is be-

\* In the original, *ow'lee'a*, or *owliya'*, plural of *wel'ee*.

† Chap. x. ver. 63.

‡ A miracle performed by a *wel'ee* is termed *kara'meh*: one performed by a prophet, *mo'agiz'eh*.



lieved to have been the ckootb of his time. I have also generally been told, that the opinion of there being *two* ckootbs is a vulgar error, founded upon two names, *Ckootb el-Hhackee'ckah* (or the Ckootb of Truth), and *Ckootb el-Gho's* (or the Ckootb of Invocation for help), which properly belong to but one person. The term *el-Ckootb el-Mootawel'lee* is applied, by those who believe in but one ckootb, to the one ruling at the present time; and by those who believe in two, to the *acting* ckootb. The Ckootb who exercises a superintendence over all other wel'ees (whether or not there be another ckootb—for if there be, he is inferior to the former) has, under his authority, wel'ees of different ranks, to perform different offices; *Negee'bs*, *Nackee'bs*, *Bedeel's*\*, &c.; who are known only to each other, and perhaps to the rest of the wel'ees, as holding such offices.

The Ckootb, it is said, is often seen, but not known as such: and the same is said of all who hold authority under him. He always has a humble demeanour, and mean dress; and mildly reproves those whom he finds acting impiously; particularly those who have a false reputation for sanctity. Though he is unknown to the world, his favourite stations are well known; yet at these places he is seldom visible. It is asserted that he is almost constantly seated at *Mek'keh*, on the roof of the *Ka'abeh*; and, though never seen there, is always heard at midnight to call twice, "O thou most merciful of those who show mercy †!" which cry is then repeated from the *ma'd'nehs* of the temple, by the *moo-ed'dins*: but a respectable pilgrim, whom I have just questioned

\* In the plural forms, *Anga'b* or *Noog'aba*, *Noock'aba*, and *Abda'l*.

† *Ya' ar'hhamar-ra'hhemce'n*.



upon this matter, has confessed to me that he himself has witnessed that this cry is made by a regular minister of the mosque ; yet that few pilgrims know this : he believes, however, that the roof of the Ka'abeh is the chief *mur'kaz* (or station) of the Ckootb. Another favourite station of this revered and unknown person is the gate of Cairo called Ba'b Zoowey'leh, which is at the southern extremity of that part of the metropolis which constituted the old city ; though now in the heart of the town ; for the capital has greatly increased towards the south, as it has also towards the west. From its being a supposed station of this mysterious being, the Ba'b Zoowey'leh is commonly called "*El-Mootawel'lee* \*." One leaf of its great wooden door (which is never shut), turned back against the eastern side of the interior of the gateway, conceals a small vacant space, which is said to be the place of the Ckootb. Many persons, on passing by it, recite the Fa't'hah ; and some give alms to a beggar who is generally seated there, and who is regarded by the vulgar as one of the servants of the Ckootb. Numbers of persons afflicted with head-ache drive a nail into the door, to charm away the pain ; and many sufferers from the tooth-ache extract a tooth, and insert it in a crevice of the door, or fix it in some other way, to insure their not being attacked again by the same malady. Some curious individuals often try to peep behind the door, in the vain hope of catching a glimpse of the Ckootb, should he happen to be there, and not at the moment invisible. He has also many other stations, but of inferior celebrity, in Cairo ; as well as one at the tomb of the seyd Ahh'mad El-Bed'awee, at Tun'ta ; another at El-Mahhal'leh (which,

\* For Ba'b *El-Mootawel'lee*.



as well as Tun'ta, is in the Delta); and others in other places. He is believed to transport himself from Mek'keh to Cairo in an instant; and so also from any one place to another. Though he has a number of favourite stations, he does not abide solely at these; but wanders throughout the whole world, among persons of every religion, whose appearance, dress, and language he assumes; and distributes to mankind, chiefly through the agency of the subordinate wel'ees, evils and blessings, the awards of destiny. When a Ckootb dies, he is immediately succeeded in his office by another.

Many of the Moos'lims say that Elijah, or Elias, whom they generally call El-Khidr, was the Ckootb of his time; and that he invests the successive ckootbs: for they acknowledge that he has never died. This particular in their superstitious notions respecting the ckootbs, combined with some others which I have before mentioned, is very curious when compared with what we are told, in the Bible, of Elijah, of his being transported from place to place by the spirit of God; of his investing Elisha with his miraculous powers, and his offices; and of the subjection of the other prophets to him and to his immediate successor\*. Some wel'ees renounce the pleasures of the world, and the society of mankind; and, in a desert place, give themselves up to meditation upon heaven, and prayer; depending upon divine providence for their support: but their retreat becomes known; and the Arabs daily bring them food. This, again, reminds us of the history of Elijah: for, in the opinion of some critics, we should read, for the word "ravens," in the fourth and sixth verses of the seventeenth chapter of the second book of Kings, "Arabs:"

\* See 1 Kings, xviii. 12, and 2 Kings, ii. 9—16.



“ I have commanded the *Arabs* to feed thee”—“ And the *Arabs* brought him bread.” &c.

Certain *wel'ees* are said to be commissioned by the *Ckootb* to perform offices which, according to the accounts of my informants here, are far from being easy. These are termed *As-hha'b ed-Dar'ak*, which is interpreted as signifying “ watchmen,” or “ overseers.” In illustration of their employments, the following anecdote was related to me a few days ago.—A devout tradesman in this city, who was ardently desirous of becoming a *wel'ee*, applied to a person who was generally believed to belong to this holy class, and implored the latter to assist him to obtain the honour of an interview with the *Ckootb*. The applicant, after having undergone a strict examination as to his motives, was desired to perform the ordinary ablution (*el-woodoo'*) very early the next morning; then to repair to the mosque of *El-Moo-ei'yad* (at an angle of which is the *Ba'b Zoowey'leh*, or *El-Mootawel'lee*, before mentioned), and to lay hold of the first person whom he should see coming out of the great door of this mosque. He did so. The first person who came out was an old, venerable-looking man; but meanly clad; wearing a brown woollen gown (or *zaaboo't*); and this proved to be the *Ckootb*. The candidate kissed his hand, and entreated to be admitted among the *As-hha'b ed-Dar'ak*. After much hesitation, the prayer was granted: the *Ckootb* said, “ Take charge of the district which consists of the *Durb el-Ahh'mar*\* and its immediate neighbourhood;” and immediately the person thus addressed found himself to be a *wel'ee*; and perceived that he was acquainted with things concealed from ordinary mortals: for a

\* A street on the south of the *Ba'b Zoowey'leh*.



wel'ee is said to be acquainted by God with all secrets necessary for him to know.—It is commonly said of a wel'ee, that he knows what is secret\*, or not discoverable by the senses; which seems plainly contradictory to what we read in several places in the Ckoor-a'n; that none knoweth what is secret (or hidden from the senses) but God: the Moos'lims, however, who are seldom at a loss in a discussion, argue that the passages above alluded to, in the Ckoor-a'n, imply the knowledge of secrets in an unrestricted sense; and that God imparts to wel'ees such secrets only as He thinks fit.

The wel'ee above mentioned, as soon as he had entered upon his office, walked through his district; and seeing a man at a shop, with a jar full of boiled beans before him, from which he was about to serve his customers as usual, took up a large piece of stone, and, with it, broke the jar. The bean-seller immediately jumped up; seized hold of a palm-stick that lay by his side; and gave the wel'ee a severe beating: but the holy man complained not; nor did he utter a cry: as soon as he was allowed, he walked away. When he was gone, the bean-seller began to try if he could gather up some of the scattered contents of the jar. A portion of the jar remained in its place; and on looking into this, he saw a venomous serpent in it, coiled round, and dead. In horror at what he had done, he exclaimed, "There is no strength nor power but in God! I implore forgiveness of God, the Great! What have I done! This man is a wel'ee; and has prevented my selling what would have poisoned my customers."—He looked at every passenger all that day, in the hope of seeing again the saint whom he had thus injured, that he might implore

\* *Yu'alam el-gheyb.*



his forgiveness ; but he saw him not ; for he was too much bruised to be able to walk. On the following day, however, with his limbs still swollen from the blows he had received, the wel'ee limped through his district, and broke a great jar of milk at a shop not far from that of the bean-seller ; and its owner treated him as the bean-seller had done the day before ; but while he was beating him, some persons ran up, and stopped his hand, informing him that the person whom he was thus punishing was a wel'ee, and relating to him the affair of the serpent that was found in the jar of beans “ Go, and look,” said they, “ in your jar of milk, and you will find, at the bottom of it, something either poisonous or unclean.” He looked ; and found, in the remains of the jar, a dead dog.—On the third day, the wel'ee, with the help of a staff, hobbled painfully up the Durb el-Ahh'mar, and saw a servant carrying, upon his head, a supper-tray covered with dishes of meat, vegetables, and fruit, for a party who were going to take a repast in the country. He put his staff between the servant's legs, and overthrew him ; and the contents of the dishes were scattered in the street. With a mouth full of curses, the servant immediately began to give the saint as severe a thrashing as he himself expected to receive from his disappointed master for this accident : but several persons soon collected around him ; and one of these bystanders observed a dog eat part of the contents of one of the dishes, and, a moment after, fall down dead : he instantly seized the hand of the servant, and informed him of this circumstance, which proved that the man whom he had been beating was a wel'ee. Every apology was made to the injured saint, with many prayers for his forgiveness ; but he was so disgusted with



his new office, that he implored God and the Ckootb to release him from it; and, in answer to his solicitations, his supernatural powers were withdrawn, and he returned to his shop, more contented than before.—This story is received as true by the people of Cairo; and therefore I have inserted it; for, in treating of superstitions, we have more to do with opinions than with facts. I am not sure, indeed, that it is altogether false: the supposed saint might have employed persons to introduce the dead serpent and dog into the vessels which he broke. I am told that many a person has obtained the reputation of being a wel'ee by artifices of the kind just mentioned.

There have been many instances, in Egypt, of wel'ees afflicting themselves by austerities similar to those which are often practised by devotees in India. At the present time there is living, in Cairo, a wel'ee who has placed an iron collar round his neck, and chained himself to a wall of his chamber; and it is said that he has been in this state more than thirty years: but some persons assert that he has often been seen to cover himself over with a blanket, as if to sleep, and that the blanket has been removed immediately after, and nobody found beneath it! Stories of this kind are related and believed by persons who, in many respects, are endowed with good sense; and to laugh, or express discredit, on hearing them, would give great offence. I was lately told, that, a certain wel'ee being beheaded, for a crime of which he was not guilty, his head spoke after it was cut off\*; and, of another decapitated under similar circumstances, that his blood traced upon the ground,

\* Like that of the Physician Doo'ba'n, whose story is told in "the Thousand and one Nights."



in Arabic characters, the following declaration of his innocence—" I am a wel'ee of God ; and have died a martyr."

It is a very remarkable trait in the character of the people of Egypt and other countries of the East, that Moos'lims, Christians, and Jews adopt each other's superstitions, while they abhor the more rational doctrines of each other's faiths. In sickness, the Moos'lim sometimes employs Christian and Jewish priests to pray for him : the Christians and Jews, in the same predicament, often call in Moos'lim saints, for the like purpose. Many Christians are in the frequent habit of visiting certain Moos'lim saints here ; kissing their hands ; begging their prayers, counsels, or prophecies ; and giving them money and other presents.

Though their prophet disclaimed the power of performing miracles, the Moos'lims attribute to him many ; and several miracles are still, they say, constantly, or occasionally, performed for his sake, as marks of the divine favour and honour. The pilgrims who have visited El-Medee'neh relate that there is seen, every night, a ray or column of faint light, rising from the cupola over the grave of the Prophet to a considerable height, apparently to the clouds, or, as some say, to Paradise ; but that the observer loses sight of it when he approaches very near the tomb\*. This is one of the most remarkable of the miracles which are related as being still witnessed. On my asking one of the most grave and sensible of all my Moos'lim friends here, who had been on a pilgrimage, and visited El-Medee'neh, whether this assertion were true, he averred that it was ;

\* It is also said, that similar phenomena, but not so brilliant distinguish some other tombs at El-Medee'neh and elsewhere.



that he had seen it every night of his stay in that city ; and he remarked that it was a most striking and impressive proof of God's favour and honour for " our lord Mohham'mad." I did not presume to question the truth of what he asserted himself to have seen ; nor to suggest that the great number of lights kept burning every night in the mosque might produce this effect ; but, to judge whether this might be the case, I asked my friend to describe to me the construction of the apartment of the tomb, its cupola, &c. He replied, that he did not enter it, nor the Ka'abeh at Mek'keh, partly from his being in a state of excessive nervous excitement (from his veneration for those holy buildings, but particularly for the former, which almost affected him with a kind of hysteric fit), and partly because, being of the sect of the Hhan'afees, he held it improper, after he should have stepped upon such sacred ground, ever again to run the risk of defiling his feet, by walking barefooted : consequently, he would have been obliged always to wear leather socks or mezz within his outer shoes ; which, he said, he could not afford to do —The pilgrims also assert, that, in approaching El-Medee'neh, from the distance of three days' journey, or more, they always see a flickering lightning, in the direction of the sacred city, which they believe to proceed from the Prophet's tomb. They say, that, however they turn, they always see this lightning in the direction of El-Medee'-neh. There is something strikingly poetical in this and in the former statement.

A superstitious veneration, and honours unauthorized by the Ckoor-a'n or any of the Traditions, are paid, by all sects of Moos'lims, excepting the Wahi'ha'bees, to deceased saints, even more than to those who are living ;



and more particularly by the Moos'lims of Egypt\*. Over the graves of most of the more celebrated saints are erected large and handsome mosques: over that of a saint of less note (one who, by a life of sanctity or hypocrisy, has acquired the reputation of being a wel'ee, or devout sheykh) is constructed a small, square, white-washed building, crowned with a cupola. There is generally, directly over the vault in which the corpse is deposited, an oblong monument of stone or brick (called *turke'beh*) or wood (in which case it is called *ta'boo't*); and this is usually covered with silk or linen, with some words from the Ckoor-a'n worked upon it, and surrounded by a railing or screen, of wood or bronze, called *mucksoo'rah*. Most of the sanctuaries of saints in Egypt are tombs; but there are several which only contain some inconsiderable relic of the person to whom they are dedicated; and there are a few which are mere cenotaphs. The most sacred of all these sanctuaries is the mosque of the Hhas'aney'n, in which the head of the martyr El-Hhosey'n, the son of the Ima'm 'Al'ee, and grandson of the Prophet, is said to be buried. Among others but little inferior in sanctity, are the mosques of the sey'yideh Zey'neb (daughter of the

\* Several superstitious customs, observed in the performance of many ordinary actions, result from their extravagant respect for their prophet, and their saints in general. For instance, on lighting the lamp in the evening, more particularly at a shop, it is customary to say, "Commemorate Mohham'mad, and forget not the excellencies of 'Al'ee: the Fa't'hah for the Prophet, and for every wel'ee:" and then, to repeat the Fa't'hah. It is usual to say, on first seeing the new moon, "O God favour our lord Mohham'mad! God make thee a blessed moon (or month):" on looking at one's face in a glass, "O God favour our lord Mohham'mad!"



Ima'm 'Al'ee, and grand-daughter of the Prophet), the sey'yideh Sekee'neh (daughter of the Ima'm El-Hho-sey'n), the sey'yideh Nefee'seh (great-grand-daughter of the Ima'm El-Hhas'an), and the Ima'm Esh-Sha'fe'ee, already mentioned as the author of one of the four great Moos'lim sects, that to which most of the people of Cairo belong. The buildings above mentioned, with the exception of the last two, are within the metropolis: the last but one is in a southern suburb of Cairo; and the last, in the great southern cemetery.

The Egyptians occasionally visit these and other sanctuaries of their saints, either merely with the view of paying honour to the deceased, and performing meritorious acts for the sake of these venerated persons, which they believe will call down a blessing on themselves, or for the purpose of urging some special petition, as for the restoration of health, or for the gift of offspring, &c.; in the persuasion that the merits of the deceased will insure a favourable reception of the prayers which they offer up in such consecrated places. The generality of the Moos'lins regard their deceased saints as intercessors with the Deity; and make votive offerings to them. The visitor walks round the mucksoo'rah or the monument from left to right; and recites the Fa't'hhah, inaudibly, or in a very low voice, before its door, or before each of its four sides. Sometimes a longer chapter of the Ckoor-a'n than the first (or Fa't'hhah) is recited afterwards; and sometimes a *khul'meh* (or recitation of the whole of the Ckoor-a'n) is performed on such an occasion. These acts of devotion are generally performed for the sake of the saint; though merit is likewise believed to reflect upon the visitor who makes a recitation. He usually says at the close of this, " [Assert] the abso-



lute glory of thy Lord, the Lord of Might, exempting Him from that which they [that is, the unbelievers] ascribe to Him" (namely, the having a son, or a partaker of his godhead); and adds, "and peace be on the Apostles; and praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures. O God, I have transferred the merit of what I have recited from the excellent C'koor-a'n to the person to whom this place is dedicated," or—"to the soul of this we'ee." Without such a declaration, or an intention to the same effect, the merit of the recital belongs solely to the person who performs it. After this recital, the visitor, if it be his desire, offers up any prayer, for temporal or spiritual blessings; generally using some such form as this—"O God, I conjure thee by the Prophet, and by him to whom this place is dedicated, to grant me such and such blessings;" or "My burdens be on God and on thee, O thou to whom this place is dedicated." In doing this, some persons face any side of the mucksoo'rah: but it is more proper to face the mucksoo'rah and the ekib'leh. During the prayer, the hands are held as in the private supplications after the ordinary prayers of every day; and afterwards they are drawn down the face.—Many of the visitors kiss the threshold of the building, and the walls, windows, mucksoo'rah, &c. The rich, and persons in easy circumstances, when they visit the tomb of a saint, distribute money or bread to the poor; and often give money to one or more water-carriers to distribute water to the poor and thirsty, for the sake of the saint. There are particular days of the week on which certain tombs are more generally visited: thus, the mosque of the Hhas'aney'n is mostly visited, by men, on Tuesday, and by women, on Saturday: that of the sey'yideh Zey'neb, on Wednesday: that of the Ima'm



Esh-Sha'fe'ee, on Friday. On these occasions, it is a common custom for the male visitors to take with them sprigs of myrtle : they place some of these on the monument, or on the floor within the mucksoo'rah ; and take back the remainder, which they distribute to their friends. The poor sometimes place *khoo's* (or palm-leaves) ; as most persons do upon the tombs of their friends and relations. The women of Cairo, instead of the myrtle or palm-leaves, often place roses, flowers of the hhen'na-tree, jasmine, &c.

At almost every village in Egypt is the tomb of some favourite or patron saint, which is generally visited, on a particular day of the week, by many of the inhabitants ; chiefly women ; some of whom bring thither bread, which they leave there for poor travellers, or any other persons. Some also place small pieces of money in these tombs. These gifts are offerings to the sheykh ; or given for his sake. Another custom common among the peasants is, to make votive sacrifices at the tombs of their sheykhs. For instance, a man makes a vow (*nedr*) that, if he recover from a sickness, or obtain a son or any other specific object of desire, he will give, to a certain sheykh (deceased), a goat, or a lamb, or a sheep, &c. : if he attain his object, he sacrifices the animal which he has vowed at the tomb of the sheykh, and makes a feast with its meat for any persons who may choose to attend. Having given the animal to the saint, he thus gives to the latter the merit of feeding the poor. Little kids are often vowed as future sacrifices ; and have the right ear slit ; or are marked in some other way. It is not uncommon, too, without any definite view but that of obtaining general blessings, to make these vows : and sometimes, a peasant vows that he will sacrifice, for the sake



of a saint, a calf which he possesses, as soon as it is full-grown and fatted: it is let loose, by consent of all his neighbours, to pasture where it will, even in fields of young wheat; and at last, after it has been sacrificed, a public feast is made with its meat. Many a large bull is thus given away.

Almost every celebrated saint, deceased, is honoured by an anniversary birth-day festival, which is called *moo'lid*, or, more properly, *mo'lid*. On the occasions of such festivals, many persons visit the tomb, both as a duty and as a supposed means of obtaining a special blessing; fickees are hired to recite the Ckoor-a'n, for the sake of the saint; fooek'ara often perform zikrs; and the people living in the neighbourhood of the tomb hang lamps before their doors, and devote half the night to such pleasures as those of smoking, sipping coffee, and listening to story-tellers at the coffee-shops, or to the recitals of the Ckoor-a'n, and the zikrs. I have now a cluster of lamps hanging before my door, in honour of the moo'lid of a sheykh who is buried near the house in which I am living. Even the native Christians often hang up lamps on these occasions. The festivities often continue several days. The most famous moo'lids celebrated in Cairo, next to that of the Prophet, are those of the Hhas'aney'n and the sey'yideh Zey'neb; accounts of which will be found in a subsequent chapter, on the periodical public festivals, &c. of the people of Egypt. Most of the Egyptians not only expect a blessing to follow their visiting the tomb of a celebrated saint, but they also dread that some misfortune will befall them if they neglect this act. Thus, while I am writing these lines, an acquaintance of mine is suffering from an illness which he attributes to his having neglected, for the



last two years, to attend the festivals of the sey'd Ahh'mad El-Bed'awee, at Tun'ta; this being the period of one of these festivals. The tomb of this saint attracts almost as many visitors, at the periods of the great annual festivals, from the metropolis, and from various parts of Lower Egypt, as Mek'keh does pilgrims from the whole of the Moos'lim world. Three moo'lids are celebrated in honour of him every year; one, about the tenth of the Coptic month of Too'beh (17th or 18th of January); the second, at, or about, the Vernal Equinox\*; and the third, or great moo'lid, about a month after the Summer Solstice (or about the middle of the Coptic month of Ebee'b), when the Nile has risen considerably, but the dams of the canals are not yet cut. Each lasts one week and a day; beginning on a Friday, and ending on the afternoon of the next Friday; and, on each night, there is a display of fireworks. One week after each of these, is celebrated the moo'lid of the sey'd Ibrahee'm Ed-Desoo'ckee, at the town of Desoo'ck, on the east bank of the western branch of the Nile. The sey'd Ibrahee'm was a very famous saint; next in rank to the sey'd El-Bed'awee. These moo'lids, both of the sey'd El-Bed'awee and of the sey'd Ibrahee'm, are great fairs, as well as religious festivals. At the latter, most of the visitors remain in their boats; and some of the Saadee'yeh durwee'shes of Rashee'd exhibit their feats with serpents: some carrying serpents with silver rings in their mouths, to prevent their biting: others partly devouring these reptiles alive. The religious ceremonies at both are merely zikrs†, and recitals of the Ckoor-a'n.

\* Called the *Shems el-Kebee'reh*.

† The *zikh* will be fully described in another chapter, on the periodical public festivals, &c., in the second volume.



—It is customary among the Moos'lms, as it was among the Jews, to rebuild, whitewash, and decorate, the tombs of their saints, and occasionally to put a new covering over the turkee'beh or ta'boo't; and many of them do this from the same pharisaic motives which actuated the Jews\*.

*Durwee'shes* are very numerous in Egypt; and some of them who confine themselves to religious exercises, and subsist by alms, are much respected in this country; particularly by the lower orders. Various artifices are employed by persons of this class to obtain the reputation of superior sanctity, and of being endowed with the power of performing miracles. Many of them are regarded as well'ees.

A direct descendant of Al'oo Bekr, the first Khalee'feh, having the title of *Esh-Sheykh el-Bek'ree*, and regarded as the representative of that prince, holds authority over all orders of *durwee'shes* in Egypt. The present Sheykh el-Bek'ree, who is also descended from the Prophet, is Nackee'b el-Ashra'f, or chief of the Sheree'fs.—I may here add that the second Khalee'feh, 'Om'ar, has likewise his representative, who is the sheykh of the 'En'a'nee'yeh, or Owla'd 'Ena'n, an order of *durwee'shes* so named from one of their celebrated sheykhs, Ibn 'Ena'n. 'Osma'n has no representative; having left no issue. The representative of 'Al'ee is called Sheykh es-Sa'da't, or Sheykh of the Sey'yids, or Sheree'fs; a title of less importance than that of Nackee'b of the Sheree'fs. Each of these three sheykhs is termed the possessor of the *segga'deh* (or prayer carpet) of his great ancestor. So also the sheykh of an order of *durwee'shes* is called the possessor of the *segga'deh* of the founder of the

\* See St. Matthew, xxiii. 29.



order\*. The *segga'deh* is considered as the spiritual throne. There are four great *segga'dehs* of *durwee'shes* in Egypt; which are those of four great orders about to be mentioned.

The most celebrated orders of *durwee'shes* in Egypt are the following.—1. The *Rif'a'ee'yeh* (in the singular *Rifa'ee*). This order was founded by the seyd *Ahl'mad Rifa'ah El-Kebee'r*. Its banners, and the turbans of its members, are black; or the latter are of a very deep blue woollen stuff, or muslin of a very dark greenish hue. The *Rifa'ee durwee'shes* are celebrated for the performance of many wonderful feats†. The *'Ilwa'nee'yeh*, or *Owla'd 'Ilwa'n*, who are a sect of the *Rifa'ees*, pretend to thrust iron spikes into their eyes and bodies without sustaining any injury; and in appearance they do this, in such a manner as to deceive any person who can believe it possible for a man to do such things in reality. They also break large masses of stone on their chests; eat live coals, glass, &c.; and are said to pass swords completely through their bodies, and packing-needles through both their cheeks, without suffering any pain, or leaving any wound: but such performances are now seldom witnessed. I am told that it was a common practice for a *durwee'sh* of this order to hollow out a piece of the trunk of a palm-tree, fill it with rags soaked with oil and tar, then set fire to these contents, and carry the burning mass under his arm, in a religious procession (wearing only drawers); the flames curling over his bare chest, back, and head, and apparently doing him no injury.—The *Saadee'yeh*,

\* The title is *sa'hheb segga'deh*.

† In most of their juggling performances, the *durwee'shes* of Egypt are inferior to the most expert of the Indians.



an order founded by the sheykh Sa'ad ed-Deen El-Giba'wee, are another and more celebrated sect of the Rifa'ees. Their banners are green; and their turbans, of the same colour, or of the dark hue of the Rifa'ees in general. There are many durwee'shes of this order who handle, with impunity, live, venomous serpents, and scorpions; and partly devour them. The serpents, however, they render incapable of doing any injury, by extracting their venomous fangs; and doubtless they also deprive the scorpions of their poison. On certain occasions (as, for instance, on that of the festival of the birth of the Prophet), the Sheykh of the Saadee'yeh rides, on horseback, over the bodies of a number of his durwee'shes, and other persons, who throw themselves on the ground for the purpose; and all assert that they are not injured by the tread of the horse \*. This ceremony is called the *do'sch*. Many Rifa'ee and Sa'adee durwee'shes obtain their livelihood by going about to charm away serpents from houses. Of the feats of these modern Psylli, an account will be given in another chapter.—2. The *Cka'diree'yeh*; an order founded by the famous seyd 'Abd El-Cka'dir El-Geela'nee. Their banners and turbans are white. Most of the Cka'diree'yeh of Egypt are fishermen: these, in religious processions, carry, upon poles, nets of various colours (green, yellow, red, white, &c.), as the banners of their order.—3. The *Ahhmedee'yeh*, or order of the seyd Ahh'mad El-Bed'awee, whom I have lately mentioned. This is a very numerous and highly respected order. Their banners and turbans are red.—The *Bel'yoo'mee'yeh*

\* In the chapter on the periodical public festivals, &c., this and other performances of the durwee'shes of Cairo will be described more fully.



(founded by the seyd 'Al'ee El-Beiyoo'mee), the *Sh'a-ra'wee'yeh* (founded by the sheykh Esh-Shaara'wee), the *Shin'na'wee'yeh* (founded by the seyd 'Al'ee Esh-Shinna'wee), and many other orders, are sects of the Ahhmedee'yeh. The Shin'na'wee'yeh train an ass to perform a strange part in the ceremonies of the last day of the moo'lid of their great patron saint, the seyd Ahh'mad El-Bed'awee, at Tun'ta: the ass, of its own accord, enters the mosque of the seyd, proceeds to the tomb, and there stands while multitudes crowd around it, and each person who can approach near enough to it plucks off some of its hair, to use as a charm, until the skin of the poor beast is as bare as the palm of a man's hand. There is another sect of the Ahhmedee'yeh, called *Owla'd Noo'hh*, all young men; who wear *tur-too'rs* (or high caps), with a tuft of pieces of various-coloured cloth on the top, wooden swords, and numerous strings of beads; and carry a kind of whip (called *firkill'leh*), a thick twist of cords.—4. The *Bard'himeh*, or *Boorha'mee'yeh*; the order of the seyd Ibrahee'm Ed-Desoo'ckee; whose moo'lid has been mentioned above. Their banners and turbans are green.—There are many other classes of durwee'shes; some of whom are sects of one or other of the above orders. Among the more celebrated of them are the *Hhef'na'wee'yeh*, the 'Af'ee'fe'yeh, the *Dimurda'shee'yeh*, the *Nucksha-ben'dee'yeh*, the *Bekred'yeh*, and the *Leysee'yeh*.

It is impossible to become acquainted with all the tenets, rules, and ceremonies of the durwee'shes, as many of them, like those of the freemasons, are not to be divulged to the uninitiated. A durwee'sh with whom I am acquainted thus described to me his taking the 'ahd, or initiatory covenant; which is nearly the same



in all the orders. He was admitted by the sheykh of the Dimurda'shee'ych. Having first performed the ablution preparatory to prayer (the woodoo'), he seated himself upon the ground before the sheykh, who was seated in like manner. The sheykh and he (the *mooree'd*, or candidate) then clasped their right hands together in the manner which I have described as practised in making the marriage-contract: in this attitude, and with their hands covered by the sleeve of the sheykh, the candidate took the covenant; repeating, after the sheykh, the following words, commencing with the form of a common oath of repentance. "I beg forgiveness of God, the Great" (three times); "than whom there is no other deity; the Living, the Everlasting: I turn to Him with repentance, and beg his grace, and forgiveness, and exemption from the fire." The sheykh then said to him, "Dost thou turn to God with repentance?" He replied, "I do turn to God with repentance; and I return unto God; and I am grieved for what I have done [amiss], and I determine not to relapse"—and then repeated, after the sheykh, "I beg for the favour of God, the Great, and the noble Prophet; and I take as my sheykh and my guide unto God (whose name be exalted), my master 'Abd Er-Rahhee'm Ed-Dimurda'shee El-Khal'wet'ee Er-Rifa'ee En-Neb'awee; not to change, nor to separate; and God is our witness: by God, the Great!" (this oath was repeated three times): "there is no deity but God" (this also was repeated three times). The sheykh and the mooree'd then recited the Fa't'hah together; and the latter concluded the ceremony by kissing the sheykh's hand.

The religious exercises of the durwee'shes chiefly consist in the repetition of *zikrs*. Sometimes standing in



the form of a circular or oblong ring, or in two rows, facing each other, and sometimes sitting, they exclaim, or chant, *La' ila'ha il'la-lla'h* (There is no deity but God), or *Alla'h! Alla'h! Alla'h!* (God! God! God!), or repeat other invocations, &c., over and over again, until their strength is almost exhausted; accompanying their ejaculations or chants with a motion of the head, or of the whole body, or of the arms. From long habit, they are able to continue these exercises for a surprising length of time without intermission. They are often accompanied, at intervals, by one or more players upon a kind of flute, called *na'y*, or a double reed-pipe, called *arghool*, and by persons singing religious odes; and some durwee'shes use a little drum, called *ba'z*\*, or a tambourine, during their zikrs: some, also, perform a peculiar dance; the description of which, as well as of several different zikrs, I reserve for a future chapter.

Some of the rites of durwee'shes (as forms of prayer, modes of zikr, &c) are observed only by particular orders: others, by members of various orders. Among the latter may be mentioned the rites of the *Khal'wet'es* and *Sha'zilees*; two great classes; each of which has its sheykh. The chief difference between these is that each has its particular form of prayer to repeat every morning; and that the former distinguish themselves by occasional seclusion; whence their appellation of "*Khal'wet'es*†:" the prayer of this class is repeated before day-break; and is called *wir'd sah'ar*: that of the *Sha'zilees*, which is called *hhez'b csh-Sha'zilee*, after day-break. Sometimes, a *Khal'wet'ee* enters a solitary

\* For descriptions of the instruments here mentioned, see a subsequent chapter, on the Egyptian music, &c.

† From *khal'weh*, a cell, or closet.



cell, and remains in it for forty days and nights, fasting from day-break till sunset the whole of this period. Sometimes also a number of the same class confine themselves, each in a separate cell, in the sepulchral mosque of the sheykh Ed-Dimur'da'shee, on the north of Cairo, and remain there three days and nights, on the occasion of the moo'lid of that saint, and only eat a little rice, and drink a cup of sherbet, in the evening: they employ themselves in repeating certain forms of prayer, &c. not imparted to the uninitiated; only coming out of their cells to unite in the five daily prayers in the mosque; and never answering any one who speaks to them but by saying "There is no deity but God." Those who observe the forty days' fast, and seclude themselves during that long period, practice nearly the same rules; and employ their time in repeating the testimony of the faith, imploring forgiveness, praising God, &c.

Almost all the durwee'shes of Egypt are tradesmen or artisans or agriculturists; and only occasionally assist in the rites and ceremonies of their respective orders; but there are some who have no other occupations than those of performing zikrs at the festivals of saints and at private entertainments, and of chanting in funeral processions. These are termed *foock'ara*, or *facke'ers*; which is an appellation given also to the poor in general, but especially to poor devotees. Some obtain their livelihood as water-carriers, by supplying the passengers in the streets of Cairo, and the visitors at religious festivals, with water, which they carry in an earthen vessel, or a goat's skin, on the back. A few lead a wandering life, and subsist on alms; which they often demand with great importunacy and effrontery. Some of these distinguish themselves in the same manner as certain reputed



saints before mentioned, by the *dulck*, or coat of patches, and the staff with shreds of cloth of different colours attached to the top: others wear fantastic dresses of various descriptions.

Some Rifa'ee durwee'shes (besides those who follow the occupation of charming away serpents from houses) pursue a wandering life; travelling about Egypt, and profiting by a ridiculous superstition which I must here mention. A venerated saint, called See Da-oo'd El-'Az'ab (or Master David the Bachelor), who lived at Tefahineh, a village in Lower Egypt, had a calf, which always attended him, brought him water, &c. Since his death, some Rifa'ee durwee'shes have been in the habit of rearing a number of calves at his native place, or burial place, above named; teaching them to walk up stairs, to lie down at command, &c.; and then going about the country, each with his calf, to obtain alms. The calf is called '*Egl El-'Az'ab* (the Calf of El-'Az'ab, or of the Bachelor). I once called into my house one of these durwee'shes, with his calf; the only one I have seen: it was a buffalo calf; and had two bells suspended to it; one attached to a collar round its neck, and the other, to a girth round its body. It walked up the stairs very well; but showed that it had not been very well trained in every respect. The '*Egl El-'Az'ab* is vulgarly believed to bring into the house a blessing from the saint after whom it is called.

There are numerous wandering Turkish and Persian durwee'shes in Egypt; and to these, more than to the few Egyptian durwee'shes who lead a similar life, must the character for impudence and importunacy be ascribed. Very often, particularly in Rum'ada'n, a foreign durwee'sh goes to the mosque of the Hhas'aney'n,



which is that most frequented by the Turks and Persians, at the time of the Friday-prayers; and, when the Khattee'b is reciting the first khoot'beh, passes between the ranks of persons who are sitting upon the floor, and places before each a little slip of paper upon which are written a few words, generally exhortative to charity (as "He who giveth alms will be provided for"—"The poor durwee'sh asketh an alms," &c.); by which proceeding he usually obtains from each, or almost every person, a piece of five or ten fud'dahs, or more. Many of the Persian durwee'shes in Egypt carry an oblong bowl of cocoa-nut or wood or metal, in which they receive their alms, and put their food: and a wooden spoon; and most of the foreign durwee'shes wear dresses peculiar to their respective orders: they are chiefly distinguished by the cap: the most common description of cap is of a sugar-loaf, or conical, shape, and made of felt: the other articles of dress are generally a vest and full drawers, or trowsers, or a shirt and belt, and a coarse cloak, or long coat. The Persians here all affect to be Soon'nees. The Turks are the more intrusive of the two classes.



## CHAPTER XI.

SUPERSTITIONS—*continued.*

ONE of the most remarkable traits in modern Egyptian superstition is the belief in written charms. The composition of most of these amulets is founded upon magic; and occasionally employs the pen of almost every village schoolmaster in Egypt. A person of this profession, however, seldom pursues the study of magic further than to acquire the formulæ of a few charms, most commonly consisting, for the greater part, of certain passages of the C'koor-a'n, and names of God, together with those of spirits, genii, prophets, or eminent saints, intermixed with combinations of numerals, and with diagrams, all of which are supposed to have great secret virtues.

The most esteemed of all *hhega'bs* (or charms) is a *moos'hhaf* (or copy of the C'koor-a'n). It used to be the general custom of the Turks of the middle and higher orders, and of many other Moos'lims, to wear a small *moos'hhaf* in an embroidered leather or velvet case hung upon the right side by a silk string which passed over the left shoulder: but this custom is not now very common. During my former visit to this country, a respectable Turk, in the military dress, was seldom seen without a case of this description upon his side; though it often contained no *hhega'b*. The *moos'hhaf* and other *hhega'bs* are still worn by many women; generally enclosed in cases of gold, or of gilt or



plain silver. To the former, and to many other charms, most extensive efficacy is attributed: they are esteemed preservatives against disease, enchantment, the evil eye, and a variety of other evils. The charm next in point of estimation to the *moos'hhal* is a book or scroll containing certain chapters of the *C'koor-a'n*; as the 6th, 18th, 36th, 44th, 55th, 67th, and 78th; or some others; generally seven.—Another charm, which is believed to protect the wearer (who usually places it within his cap) from the devil, genii, and many other objects of fear, is a piece of paper inscribed with the following passages from the *C'koor-a'n*\*, “And the *preservation* of both [heaven and earth] is no burden unto Him. He is the High, the Great” (chap. ii., ver. 256) “But God is the best *protector*; and He is the most merciful of those who show mercy” (chap. xii., ver. 64). “They *watch* him by the command of God” (chap. xiii., ver. 12). “And we *guard* them from every devil driven away with stones” (chap. xv., ver. 17). “And a *guard* against every rebellious devil” (chap. xxxvii., ver. 7). “And a *guard*. This is the decree of the Mighty, the Wise” (chap. lxi., ver. 11). “And God encompasseth them behind. Verily it is a glorious *C'koor-a'n*, [written] on a *preserved* tablet” (chap. lxxxv., ver. 20, 21, 22).—The ninety-nine names, or epithets, of God, comprising all the divine attributes, if frequently repeated, and written on a paper, and worn on the person, are supposed to make the wearer a particular object for the exercise of all the beneficent attributes.—In like manner it is believed that the ninety-nine names, or titles, &c., of the Prophet, written upon anything, compose a charm which (accord-

\* Called *a'ya't el-hhefz* (the verses of protection, or preservation).



ing to his own assertion, as recorded by his son-in-law the Ima'm 'Al'ee) will, if placed in a house, and frequently read from beginning to end, keep away every misfortune, pestilence and all diseases, infirmity, the envious eye, enchantment, burning, ruin, anxiety, grief, and trouble. After repeating each of these names, the Moos'lim adds, "God favour and preserve him!"—Similar virtues are ascribed to a charm composed of the names of the *As-hha'b el-Kahf* (or Companions of the Cave, also called the Seven Sleepers), together with the name of their dog\*. These names are sometimes engraved on the round tray of tinned copper which, placed on a stool, forms the table for dinner, supper, &c.—Another charm, supposed to have similar efficacy, is composed of the names of those paltry articles of property which the Prophet left at his decease. These relics † were two *seb'hahs* (or rosaries), his *moos'hhaf* (in unarranged fragments), his *mook'-hhool'ah* (or the vessel in which he kept the black powder with which he painted the edges of his eyelids), two *segga'dehs* (or prayer-carpet), a hand-mill, a staff, a tooth-stick, a suit of clothes ‡, the ewer which he used in ablution, a pair of sandals, a *boor'deh* (or a kind of woollen covering §),

\* These, it is said, were Christian youths of Ephesus, who took refuge from the persecution of the emperor Decius in a cave, and slept there, guarded by their dog, for the space of 300 [solar] or 309 [lunar] years. (See the *Ckoor-a'n*, chap. xviii.)

† Called *mookhallufa't en-neb'ee*.

‡ A shirt which is said to have been worn by the Prophet is preserved in the mosque of El-Ghoo'ree, in Cairo. It is wrapped in a Kashmee'r shawl; and not shown to any but persons of very high rank.

§ The *boor'deh*, which is worn by some of the peasants in Egypt, is an oblong piece of thick woollen stuff, resembling the



three mats, a coat of mail, a long woollen coat, his white mule *dool'dool*, and his camel *'ad'ba*.—Certain verses of the Ckoor-a'n are also written upon slips of paper, and worn upon the person as safeguards against various evils, and to procure restoration to health, love and friendship, food, &c. These and other charms, enclosed in cases of gold, silver, tin, leather, or silk, &c., are worn by many of the modern Egyptians, men, women, and children.

It is very common to see children, in this country, with a charm against the *evil eye*, enclosed in a case, generally of a triangular form, attached to the top of the cap; and horses often have similar appendages. The Egyptians take many precautions against the evil eye; and anxiously endeavour to avert its imagined consequences. When a person expresses what is considered improper or envious admiration of anything, he is generally reproved by the individual whom he has thus alarmed, who says to him, "Bless the Prophet\*!"; and if the envier obeys, saying, "O God, favour him †!", no ill effects are apprehended. It is considered very improper for a person to express his admiration of another, or of any object which is not his own

*khra'm*, excepting in colour, being generally brown or greyish. The Prophet's is described as about seven feet and a half in length, and four and a half in width. It was used by him, as boor'dehs are at present, both to envelop the body by day and as a night-covering. I may be excused for remarking here (as it seems to be unknown to some Arabic scholars) that the terms *akh'dar* and *akh'mar*, which are applied by different historians to the Prophet's boor'deh, are used to signify respectively *grey* and *brown*, as well as *green* and *red*.

\* *Sal'lee 'a-n-neb'ee*, for —*'al'a-n-neb'ee*.

† *Alla'hoom* (for *Alla'hoom'ma*) *sal'lee 'aley'h*.



property, by saying "God preserve us\*!" "How pretty!" or, "Very pretty!": the most approved expression in such cases is "*Ma' sha-lla'h!*" (or "God's will!"); which implies both admiration, and submission to, or approval of, the will of God. A person who has exclaimed "How pretty!", or used similar words, is often desired to say, rather, "*Ma' sha-lla'h!*" as well as to bless the Prophet. In the second chapter of this work, a remarkable illustration has been given of the fear which mothers in Egypt entertain of the effect of the evil eye upon their children. It is the custom in this country, when a person takes the child of another into his arms, to say, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!" and, "O God, favour our lord Mohham'mad!"; and then to add, "*Ma' sha-lla'h!*" It is also a common custom of the people of Egypt, when admiring a child, to say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of the Day-break for thee!" alluding to the Chapter of the Day-break (the 113th chapter of the Ckoor-a'n); in the end of which, protection is implored against the mischief of the envious. The parents, when they see a person stare at, or seem to envy, their young offspring, sometimes cut off a piece of the skirts of his clothes, burn it with a little salt (to which some add coriander-seed, alumn, &c.), and fumigate with the smoke, and sprinkle with the ashes, the child or children. This, it is said, should be done a little before sunset; when the sun becomes red.

Alumn is very generally used, in the following man-

\* The ejaculation which I thus translate is *Ya' selu'm*, or *Ya' selu'moo sel'um*.



ner, by the people of Egypt, to counteract the effects of the evil eye. A piece of about the size of a walnut is placed upon burning coals, and left until it has ceased to bubble. This should be done a short time before sunset; and the person who performs the operation should repeat three times, while the alumn is burning, the first chapter of the C'koor-a'n, and the last three chapters of the same; all of which are very short. On taking the alumn off the fire, it will be found (we are told) to have assumed the form of the person whose envy or malice has given occasion for this process: it is then to be pounded; put into some food; and given to a black dog, to be eaten. I have once seen this done, by a man who suspected his wife of having looked upon him with an evil eye; and in this case, the alumn did assume a form much resembling that of a woman, in what the man declared was a peculiar posture in which his wife was accustomed to sit. But the shape which the alumn takes depends almost entirely upon the disposition of the coals; and can hardly be such that the imagination may not see in it some resemblance to a human being.—Another supposed mode of obviating the effects of the envious eye is, to prick a paper with a needle, saying, at the same time, "This is the eye of such a one, the envier;" and then to burn the paper.—Alumn is esteemed a very valuable charm against the evil eye: sometimes, a small, flat piece of it, ornamented with tassels, is hung to the top of a child's cap. A tassel of little shells and beads is also used in the same manner, and for the same purpose. The small shells called cowries are considered preservatives against the evil eye; and hence, as well as for the sake of ornament, they are often attached to the trappings of camels,



horses, and other animals, and sometimes to the caps of children\*.

To counteract the effects of the evil eye, many persons in Egypt, but mostly women, make use of what is called *mey'ah mooba'rakah* (or blessed storax), which is a mixture of various ingredients that will be mentioned below, prepared and sold only during the first ten days of the month of Mohhar'ram. During this period, we often see, in the streets of Cairo, men carrying about this mixture of *mey'ah*, &c. for sale; and generally crying some such words as the following—"Mey'ah mooba'rakah! A new year and blessed 'A'shoo'rā†! The most blessed of years [may this be] to the believers! Ya' mey'ah mooba'rakah!"—The man who sells it bears upon his head a round tray, covered with different-coloured sheets of paper, red, yellow, &c.; upon which is placed the valuable mixture. In the middle is a large heap of *tift* (or refuse) of a dark reddish material for dying, mixed with a little *mey'ah* (or storax), coriander-seed‡, and seed of the fennel-flower§: round this large heap are smaller heaps; one consisting of salt dyed blue with indigo; another, of salt dyed red; a third, of salt dyed yellow; a fourth, of *sheekh* (a kind of worm-wood); a fifth, of dust of *lba'n* (or frankincense). These are all the ingredients of the "*Mey'ah mooba'rakah*." The seller is generally called into the house of the purchaser. Having placed his tray before him, and received a plate, or a piece of paper, in which to put the

\* Such appendages are evidently meant to attract the eye to themselves, and so to prevent observation and envy of the object which they are designed to protect.

† This is the name of the tenth day of Mohhar'ram.

‡ *Kooz'bar'ah*.

§ *Hhab'beh so'da*, or *hhab'bet el-bar'akah*.



quantity to be purchased, he takes a little from one heap, then from another, then from a third, and so on, until he has taken some from each heap; after which, again and again, he takes an additional quantity from each kind. While he does this, he chants a long spell, generally commencing thus—"In the name of God! and by God! There is no conqueror that conquereth God, the Lord of the East and the West: we are all his servants: we must acknowledge his unity: his unity is an illustrious attribute." After some words on the virtues of salt, he proceeds to say—"I charm thee from the eye of girl, sharper than a-spike; and from the eye of woman, sharper than a pruning-knife; and from the eye of boy, more painful than a whip; and from the eye of man, sharper than a chopping-knife;" and so on. Then he relates how Solomon deprived the evil eye of its influence; and afterwards enumerates every article of property that the house is likely to contain, and that the person who purchases his wonderful mixture may be conjectured to possess; all of which he charms against the influence of the eye. Many of the expressions which he employs in this spell are very ridiculous: words being introduced merely for the sake of rhyme.—The *mey'ah mooba'rakah*, a handful of which may be purchased for five *fud'dahs*\*, is treasured up by the purchaser during the ensuing year; and whenever it is feared that a child or other person is affected by the evil eye, a little of it is thrown upon some burning coals in a chafing-dish; and the smoke which results is generally made to ascend upon the supposed sufferer.

It is a custom among the higher and middle classes in Cairo, on the occasion of a marriage, to hang chan-

\* Now equivalent to a farthing and one fifth.



deliers in the street before the bridegroom's house ; and it often happens that a crowd is collected to see a very large and handsome chandelier suspended : in this case, it is a common practice to divert the attention of the spectators by throwing down and breaking a large jar, or by some other artifice, lest an envious eye should cause the chandelier to fall. Accidents which confirm the Egyptians in their superstitions respecting the evil eye often occur : for instance, a friend of mine has just related to me, that, a short time ago, he saw a camel carrying two very large jars of oil : a woman stopped before it, and exclaimed " God preserve us ! What large jars ! "—the conductor of the camel did not tell her to bless the Prophet ; and the camel, a few minutes after, fell, and broke both the jars, and one of its own legs.

While writing these notes on modern Egyptian superstitions, I have been amused by a complaint of one of my Mus'ree\* friends, which will serve to illustrate what I have just stated.—"The Ba'sha," he said, " having, a few days ago, given up his monopoly of the meat, the butchers now slaughter for their own shops ; and it is quite shocking to see fine sheep hung up in the streets, quite whole, tail† and all, before the public eye ; so that every beggar who passes by envies them ; and one might, therefore, as well eat poison as such meat."—My cook has made the same complaint to me ; and, rather than purchase from one of the shops near at hand, takes the trouble of going to one in a distant quarter, kept by a man who conceals his meat from the view of the passengers in the street.

\* That is, Caireen.

† The fat of the tail is esteemed a dainty.



Many of the tradesmen of the metropolis and other towns of Egypt, place over their shops (generally upon the hanging shutter which is turned up in front) a paper inscribed with the name of God, or that of the Prophet, or both, or the profession of the faith ("There is no deity but God: Mohham'mad is God's Apostle"), the *bismil'lah* ("In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful"), or some maxim of the Prophet, or a verse of the Ckoor-a'n (as, "Verily we have granted thee a manifest victory" [ch. xlviii., ver. 1], and "Assistance from God, and a speedy victory: and do thou bear good tidings to the true believers" [ch. lxi., ver. 13]), or an invocation to the deity, such as, "Oh thou opener [of the doors of prosperity, or subsistence]! O thou wise! O thou supplier of our wants! O thou bountiful \*!"—This invocation is often pronounced by the tradesman when he first opens his shop in the morning, and by the pedestrian vender of small commodities, bread, vegetables, &c., when he sets out on his daily rounds. It is a custom among the lower orders to put the first piece of money that they receive in the day to the lips and forehead before putting it in the pocket.

Besides the inscriptions over shops, we often see, in Cairo, the invocation "O God †!" sculptured over the door of a private house; and the words "The Creator is the Everlasting," or "He is the Creator, the Everlasting," painted in large characters upon the door, both as a charm and to remind the master of the house, whenever he enters it, of his own mortality‡. These

\* *Ya' fetta'h'h! Ya' 'alee'm! Ya' rczza'ck! Ya' keree'm!*

† *Ya' Al'la'h!*

‡ See the engraving of a door with this inscription inserted in the introduction.



words are often inscribed upon the door of a house when its former master, and many or all of its former inhabitants, have been removed by death.

The most approved mode of charming away sickness or disease is to write certain passages of the C'koor-a'n on the inner surface of an earthenware cup or bowl; then to pour in some water, and stir it until the writing is quite washed off; when the water, with the sacred words thus infused in it, is to be drunk by the patient. These words are as follow: "And he will *heal* the breasts of the people who believe" (chap. ix., ver. 14). "O men, now hath an admonition come unto you from your Lord; and a *remedy* for what is in your breasts" (chap. x., ver. 58). "Wherein is a *remedy* for men" (chap. xvi., ver. 71). "We send down, of the C'koor-a'n, that which is a *remedy* and mercy to the believers" (chap. xvii., ver. 84). "And when I am sick he *healeth* me" (chap. xxii., ver. 80). "Say, it is, to those who believe, a guide and a *remedy*" (chap. xli., ver. 44). Four of these verses, notwithstanding they are thus used, refer not to diseases of the *body*, but of the *mind*; and another (the third) alludes to the virtues of *honey*!—On my applying to my sheykh (or tutor) to point out to me in what chapters these verses were to be found, he begged me not to translate them into my own language; because the translation of the C'koor-a'n, unaccompanied by the original text, is prohibited: not that he seemed ashamed of the *practice* of employing these words as a charm, and did not wish my countrymen to be informed of the custom; for he expressed his full belief in their efficacy, even in the case of an infidel patient, provided he had proper confidence in their

\* Called *a'ya't esh-shif'z* (the verses of restoration).



virtue; "seeing," he observed, "that the Prophet (God favour and preserve him!) has said, 'If thou confide in God, with true confidence, He will sustain thee as He sustaineth the birds.'"

I silenced his scruples on the subject of translating these verses by telling him, that we had an English translation of the whole of the Ckoor-a'n.—Sometimes, for the cure of diseases, and to counteract poisons, &c., a draught of water from a metal cup, having certain passages of the Ckoor-a'n, and talismanic characters and figures, engraved in the interior, is administered to the patient. I have a cup of this description, lately given to me\* here (in Cairo), much admired by my Moos'lim acquaintances. On the exterior is an inscription enumerating its virtues: it is said to possess charms that will counteract all poisons &c., and the evil eye, and cure "all sicknesses and diseases, excepting the sickness of death." I have seen, here, another cup which appeared to have been exactly similar to that above mentioned; but its inscriptions were partly effaced.—The secret virtues of the Ckoor-a'n† are believed to be very numerous. One day, on my refusing to eat of a dish that I feared would do me harm, I was desired to repeat the Soo'rat Ckoorey'sh (106th chapter of the Ckoor-a'n) to the end of the words "supplieth them with food against hunger;" and to repeat these last words three times. This, I was assured, would be a certain preventive of any harm that I might have feared.

There are various things which are regarded in the same light as written charms; such as dust from the

\* By Robert Hay, Esq., who purchased it from a peasant at Thebes.

† *Asra'r el-Ckoor-a'n.*



tomb of the Prophet, water from the sacred well of Zem'zem, in the Temple of Mek'keh, and pieces of the black silk covering of the Ka'abeh\*. The water of Zem'zem is much valued for the purpose of sprinkling upon grave-clothes.—An Arab, to whom I had given some medicine which had been beneficial to him, in the Sa'ee'd, during my former visit to this country, heard me inquire for some Zem'zem-water (as several boats full of pilgrims on their return from Mek'keh were coming down the Nile), and perhaps thought, from my making this inquiry, that I was a pious Moos'lim: accordingly, to show his gratitude to me, he gave me what I was seeking to obtain. Having gone to his house, he returned to my boat, bringing a small bundle, which he opened before me. “Here,” said he, “are some things which, I know, you will value highly. Here are two tin flasks of the water of Zem'zem: one of them you shall have: you may keep it to sprinkle your winding-sheet with it. This is a *miswa'k* (a tooth-stick) dipped in the water of Zem'zem: accept it from me: clean your teeth with it, and they will never ache, nor decay. “And here,” he added (showing me three small, oblong and flat cakes, of a kind of greyish earth, each about an inch in length, and stamped with Arabic characters, ‘In the name of God! Dust of our land [mixed] with the saliva of some of us’), “these are composed of earth from over the grave of the Prophet (God favour and preserve him!): I purchased them myself in the noble tomb, on my return from the pilgrimage: one of them I give to you: you will find it a

\* Every year, on the day after the completion of the pilgrimage, a new covering is hung upon the Ka'abeh. The old one is cut up; and the greater part of it is sold to the pilgrims.



cure for every disease: the second I shall keep for myself; and the third we will eat together.”—Upon this, he broke in halves one of the three cakes; and we each ate our share. I agreed with him (though I had read the inscription) that it was delicious; and I gladly accepted his presents.—I was afterwards enabled to make several additions to my Mek’keh curiosities; comprising a piece of the covering of the Ka’abeh, brought from Mek’keh by the sheykh Ibraheem (Burekhardt), and given to me by his legatee ’Osma’n.—A cake composed of dust from the Prophet’s tomb is sometimes sewed up in a leather case, and worn as an amulet. It is also formed into lumps of the shape of a pear, and of the size of a small pear; and hung to the railing or screen which surrounds the monument over the grave of a saint, or to the monument itself, or to the windows or door of the apartment which contains it.

So numerous are the charms which the Egyptians employ to insure good fortune, or to prevent or remove evils of every kind, and so various are the superstitious practices to which they have recourse with these views, that a large volume would scarcely suffice to describe them in detail. These modes of endeavouring to obtain good, and to avoid or dispel evil, when they are not founded upon religion or magic or astrology, are termed matters of *’ilm er-rook’keh*, or the science of the distaff (that is, of the women); which designation is given to imply their absurdity, and because women are the persons who most confide in them. This term is considered, by some, as a vulgar corruption of “*’ilm er-rook’yeh*,” or “the science of enchantment:” by others, it is supposed to be substituted for the latter term by way of a pun. Some practices of the nature just



described have already been incidentally mentioned: I shall only give a few other specimens.

It is a very common custom in Cairo to hang an aloe-plant over the door of a house; particularly over that of a new house, or over a door newly built: and this is regarded as a charm to insure long and flourishing lives to the inmates, and long continuance to the house itself\*. The women also believe that the Prophet visits the house where this plant is suspended. The aloe, thus hung, without earth or water, will live for several years; and even blossom.

When any evil is apprehended from a person, it is customary to break a piece of pottery behind his back. This is also done with the view of preventing further intercourse with such a person.

As ophthalmia is very prevalent in Egypt, the ignorant people of this country resort to many ridiculous practices of a superstitious nature for its cure. Some, for this purpose, take a piece of dried mud, from the bank of the Nile at or near Boo'la'ck, the principal port of Cairo, and, crossing the river, deposit it on the opposite bank, at Imba'beh. This is considered sufficient to insure a cure.—Others, with the same view, hang to the head-dress, over the forehead, or over the diseased eye, a Venetian sequin †; but it must be one of a particular description, in which the figures on each side correspond, head to head, and feet to feet‡. Yet if a person having a Venetian sequin, or a dollar, in his

\* It has been said, by a traveller, that this is only done at pilgrims' houses; but such is not the case at least in Egypt.

† *Ben'dooch'ee*.

‡ A sequin of this description is termed *ben'dooch'ee moosha'-harah*.



pocket, enter the room of one who is suffering from ophthalmia or fever, his presence is thought to aggravate the complaint. It also is a general belief, here, that, if an individual in a state of religious uncleanness enter a room in which is a person afflicted with ophthalmia, the patient's disease will consequently be aggravated, and that a speck will appear in one or each of his eyes. A man with whom I am acquainted has, at the time I write this, just come out of a room in which he had confined himself, while suffering from ophthalmia, for about three months, from this fear; never allowing any person to enter; his servant always placing his food outside his door: he has, however, come out with a speck in one of his eyes.

Another practice, which is often adopted in similar cases, but mostly by women, and frequently with the view of preventing barrenness, is very singular and disgusting. The large open place called the Roomey'leh, on the west of the Citadel of Cairo, is a common scene of the execution of criminals; and the decapitation of persons convicted of capital offences in the metropolis was formerly almost always performed there, rather than in any other part of the town. On the south of this place is a building called *Mugh'sil es-Soolta'n*, or the Soolta'n's washing-place for the dead; where is a table of stone, upon which the body of every person who is decapitated is washed, previously to its burial; and there is a trough to receive the water, which is never poured out, but remains tainted with the blood, and fetid. Many a woman goes thither, and, for the cure of ophthalmia, or to obtain offspring, or to expedite delivery in the case of a protracted pregnancy, without speaking (for silence is deemed absolutely necessary),



passes under the stone table above mentioned, with the left foot foremost, and then over it; and does this seven times; after which, she washes her face with the polluted water that is in the trough, and gives five or ten fud'dahs to an old man and his wife, who keep the place; then goes away, still without speaking. Men, in the case of ophthalmia, often do the same. The Mugh'sil is said to have been built by the famous Beybur's, before he became Soolta'n; in consequence of his observing that the remains of persons decapitated in Cairo were often kicked about, and buried without being previously washed.

Some women step over the body of a decapitated man seven times, without speaking, to become pregnant; and some, with the same desire, dip, in the blood, a piece of cotton wool, of which they afterwards make use in'a manner I must decline mentioning.

A ridiculous ceremony is practised for the cure of a pimple on the edge of the eye-lid, or what we commonly call a "sty," and which is termed in Egypt *shahh'hha'teh*; a word which literally signifies "a female beggar." The person affected with it goes to any seven women of the name of Fa't'meh, in seven different houses, and begs, from each of them, a morsel of bread: these seven morsels constitute the remedy.—Sometimes, in a similar case, and for the same purpose, a person goes out before sunrise, and, without speaking, walks round several tombs, from right to left, which is the reverse of the regular course made in visiting tombs.—Another supposed mode of cure in a case of the same kind is, to bind a bit of cotton on the end of a stick; then to dip it in one of the troughs out of which the dogs drink in the streets of Cairo, and to wipe the eye



with it. The patient is thus careful to preserve his hand from the polluted water, when he is about to apply this to another part of his person.

As an imaginary cure for ague, some of the women of Egypt (I mean those of the Moos'lim faith) hang to their necks the finger of a Christian or Jew, cut off a corpse, and dried. This and other practices mentioned before are striking proofs of the degrading effects of superstition, and of its powerful influence over the mind: for, in general, the Moos'lms are scrupulously careful to conform with that precept of their religion which requires them to abstain from everything polluting or unclean.

When a child is unable to walk, after having obtained the age when it is usual to begin to do so, it is a common custom for the mother to bind its feet together with a palm-leaf tied in three knots, and to place it at the door of a mosque during the period when the congregation are engaged in performing the Friday-prayers: when the prayers are ended, she asks the first, second, and third persons who come out of the mosque to untie each a knot of the palm-leaf; and then carries the child home, confident that this ceremony will soon have the effect of enabling the little-one to walk.

There are several pretended antidotes for poison, and remedies for certain diseases, to which the Egyptians often have recourse, and which may perhaps have some efficacy: but superstition attributes to them incredible virtues. The bezoar-stone\* is used as an antidote for poison, by rubbing it in a cup with a little water: the cup is then filled with water, which the patient drinks. In the same manner, and for the same purpose, a cup

\* *Hhag'ar el-benzahce'i*.



made of the horn of the rhinoceros\* is used : a piece of the same material (the horn) is rubbed in it.—As a cure for the jaundice, many persons in Cairo drink the water of a well in this city, called *beer el-yaracka'n*, or “the well of the-jaundice.” It is the property of an old woman, who reaps considerable advantage from it : for it has two mouths, under one of which is a dry receptacle for anything that may be thrown down ; and the old woman desires the persons who come to use the medicinal water to drop through this mouth whatever she happens to be in need of ; as sugar, coffee, &c.

The Moos'lims have recourse to many superstitious practices to determine them when they are in doubt as to any action which they contemplate, whether they shall do it or not. Some apply, for an answer, to a table called a *za'ir'gch*. There is a table of this kind ascribed to Idree's, or Enoch. It is divided into a hundred little squares ; in each of which is written some Arabic letter. The person who consults it repeats, three times, the opening chapter of the Ckoor-a'n, and the 58th verse of the Soo'rat el-An'a'm (or 6th chapter) —“ With Him are the keys of the secret things : none knoweth them but Him : He knoweth whatever is on the dry ground or in the sea : there falleth no leaf but He knoweth it ; neither is there a single grain in the dark parts of the earth, nor a green thing nor a dry thing, but it is [written] in a perspicuous book.”—Having done this, without looking directly at the table, he places his finger upon it : he then looks to see upon what letter his finger is placed ; writes that letter ; the fifth following it ; the fifth following this ; and so on, until he comes again to the first which he wrote ; and

\* *Ckur'n khurtee't*.



these letters together compose the answer. The construction of the table may be shown by translating it, thus—

d	w	w	a	w	o	h	a	b	h
i	o	i	s	o	t	d	t	t	w
w	o	a	a	a	i	e	n	i	i
t	s	d	n	t	h	i	a	a	e
o	t	t	n	t	u	w	t	d	h
t	i	a	e	s	f	l	i	n	u
e	l	n	j	e	a	d	t	o	e
r	o	h	y	e	o	w	y	p	e
f	r	w	e	d	i	o	i	a	e
l	n	s	c	t	l	g	h	e	h

For an example, suppose the finger to be placed on the letter *e* in the sixth line: we take, from the table, the letters *e n j o y p e a c e a b s t a i n a n d*, which compose this sentence “Abstain, and enjoy peace:” the sentence always commencing with the first of the letters taken from the uppermost line. It will be seen that the table gives only five answers; and that, if we proceed as above directed, we must obtain one of these answers, with whatever letter of the table we commence. It will also be observed, that the framer of the table, knowing that men very frequently wish to do what is wrong, and seldom to do what is right, and that it is generally safer for them to abstain when in doubt, has given but one affirmative answer, and four negative\*.

\* The more approved za’ir’gehs are extremely complicated; and the process of consulting them involves intricate astrological calculations.



Some persons have recourse to the Ckoor-a'n for an answer to their doubts. This they call making an *istikha'rah*, or application for the favour of heaven. Repeating, three times, the opening chapter, the 112th chapter, and the verse above quoted, they let the book fall open, or open it at random, and, from the seventh line of the right-hand page, draw their answer. The words often will not convey a direct answer; but are taken as affirmative or negative according as their general tenor is good or bad; promising a blessing, or denouncing a threat, &c. Instead of reading the seventh line of this page, some count the number of the letters *kha* and *sheen* which occur in the whole page; and if the *khas* predominate, the inference is favourable: *kha* represents *kheyr*, or good: *sheen*, *shurr*, or evil.

There is another mode of *istikha'rah*; which is, to take hold of any two points of a *seb'hhah* (or rosary), after reciting the *Fa't'hhah* three times, and then to count the beads between these two points, saying, in passing the first bead through the fingers, "[I assert] the absolute glory of God;" in passing the second, "Praise be to God;" in passing the third, "There is no deity but God;" and repeating these expressions in the same order, to the last bead: if the first expression fall to the last bead, the answer is affirmative and favourable: if the second, indifferent: if the last, negative. This is practised by many persons.

Some, again, in similar cases, on lying down to sleep, at night, beg of God to direct them by a dream; by causing them to see something white or green, or water, if the action which they contemplate be approved, or if they are to expect approaching good fortune; and if not, by causing them to see something black or red, or



fire: they then recite the *Fa't'hhah* ten times; and continue to repeat these words—"O God, favour our lord *Mohham'mad*!"—until they fall asleep.

The Egyptians place great faith in dreams, which often direct them in some of the most important actions of life. They have two large and celebrated works on the interpretation of dreams, by *Ib'n Sha'hee'n* and *Ib'n Seeree'n*; the latter of whom was the pupil of the former. These books are consulted, even by the learned, with implicit confidence. When one person says to another, "I have seen a dream," the latter usually answers, "Good\*" (i. e. may it be of good omen), or, "Good, please God †." When a person has had an evil dream, it is customary for him to say, "O God favour our lord *Mohham'mad*!" and to spit over his left shoulder three times, to prevent an evil result.

In Egypt, as in most other countries, superstitions are entertained respecting days of the week; some being considered fortunate; and others, unfortunate.—The Egyptians regard *Sunday* as an *unfortunate* day, on account of the night which follows it.—This night, which (according to the system already mentioned) is called the night of *Monday*, the learned *Moos'lims*, and many of the inferior classes, consider *unfortunate*, because it was that of the death of their Prophet; but some regard it as *fortunate*, particularly for the consummation of marriage; though not so auspicious for this affair as the *eve* of Friday. The day following it is also considered, by some, as *fortunate*; and by others, as *unfortunate*.—*Tuesday* is generally thought *unfortunate*, and called "the day of blood;" as it is said that several eminent martyrs were put to death on this day:

\* *Kheyr*.

† *Kheyr in sha-t'ta'h*.



and hence, also, it is commonly esteemed a proper day for being bled.—*Wednesday* is regarded as *indifferent*.—*Thursday* is called *el-mooba'rak* (or the blessed); and is considered *fortunate*; particularly deriving a blessing from the following night and day.—The eve, or night, of *Friday* is *very fortunate*; especially for the consummation of marriage. Friday is blessed above all other days as being the sabbath of the Moos'lms: it is called *el-fadee'leh* (or the excellent).—*Saturday* is the *most unfortunate* of days. It is considered very wrong to commence a journey, and, by most people in Egypt, to shave, or cut the nails, on this day.—A friend of mine here was doubting whether he should bring an action against two persons on so unfortunate a day as Saturday: he decided, at last, that it was the best day of the week for him to do this, as the ill fortune must fall upon one of the two parties only, and doubtless upon his adversaries, because they were two to one.—There are some days of the *year* which are esteemed very fortunate; as those of the two grand festivals, &c.; and some which are regarded as unfortunate; as, for instance, the last Wednesday in the month of Suf'ar; when many persons make a point of not going out of their houses, from the belief that numerous afflictions fall upon mankind on that day.—Some persons draw lucky or unlucky omens from the first object they see on going out of the house in the morning: according as that object is pleasant or the reverse, they say, "our morning is good" or "— bad."



## CHAPTER XII.

## MAGIC, ASTROLOGY, AND ALCHEMY.

IF we might believe some stories which are commonly related in Egypt, it would appear that, in modern days, there have been, in this country, magicians not less skilful than Pharoah's "wise men and sorcerers" of whom we read in the Bible.

The more intelligent of the Moos'lims distinguish two kinds of magic, which they term *Er-Roo'hha'nee* (vulgo. *Rou'hha'nee*) and *Es-Sec'miya*: the former is *spiritual* magic, which is believed to effect its wonders by the agency of angels and genii, and by the mysterious virtues of certain names of God, and other supernatural means: the latter is *natural* and *deceptive* magic; and its chief agents, the less credulous Moos'lims believe to be certain perfumes and drugs, which affect the vision and imagination in a manner somewhat similar to opium: this drug, indeed, is supposed, by some persons, to be employed in the operations of the latter branch of magic.

*Er-Roo'hha'nee*, which is universally considered, among the Egyptians, as *true* magic, is of two kinds, '*il'wee* (or high) and *soof'lee* (or low); which are also called *rahhma'nee* (or divine, or, literally, relating to "the Compassionate," which is an epithet of God) and *sheyta'nee* (or satanic). The '*il'wee*, or *rahhma'nee*, is said to be a science founded on the agency of God, and



of his angels, and good genii, and on other lawful mysteries; to be always employed for good purposes, and only attained and practised by men of probity, who, by tradition, or from books, learn the names of those superhuman agents, and invocations which insure compliance with their desires. The writing of charms for good purposes belongs to this branch of magic, and to astrology, and to the science of the mysteries of numbers. The highest attainment in divine magic consists in the knowledge of the *Ism el-A'azam*. This is "the most great name" of God, which is generally believed, by the learned, to be known to none but prophets and apostles of God. A person acquainted with it can, it is said, by merely uttering it, raise the dead to life, kill the living, transport himself instantly wherever he pleases, and perform any other miracle. Some suppose it to be known to eminent *wel'ees*.—The *soof'lee* is believed to depend on the agency of the devil, and evil spirits, and unbelieving geni; and to be used for bad purposes, and by bad men. To this branch belongs the science called, by the Arabs, *es-schhr*; which is a term they give only to wicked enchantment.—Those who perform what is called *durb el-men'del* (of which I purpose to relate some examples) profess to do it by the agency of genii; that is, by the science called *er-roo'hha'nee*: but there is another opinion on this subject which will be presently mentioned.

*Es-Sec'miya* is generally pronounced, by the learned, to be a false science, and deceptive art, which produces surprising effects by those natural means which have been above mentioned; and the *durb el-men'del*, as perfumes are employed in the performance of it, is considered, by such persons, as pertaining to *es-see'miya*.



*'Ilm en-Noogoo'm*, or Astrology, is studied by many persons in Egypt. It is chiefly employed in casting nativities, in determining fortunate periods, &c.; and very commonly, to divine by what sign of the zodiac a person is influenced; which is usually done by a calculation founded upon the numerical values of the letters composing his or her name, and that of the mother: this is often done in the case of two persons who contemplate becoming man and wife, with the view of ascertaining whether they will agree.—The science called *duab er-reml*, or geomancy, by which, from certain marks made at random on paper, or on sand (whence its name), the professors pretend to discover past, passing, and future events, is, I am informed, mainly founded on astrology.

*El-Kee'miya*, or Alchymy, is also studied by many persons in Egypt, and by some possessed of talents by which they might obtain a better reputation than this pursuit procures them, and who, in spite of the derision which they experience from a few men of sounder minds, and the reproaches of those whom they unintentionally make their dupes, continue, to old age, their fruitless labours. Considerable knowledge of Chymistry is, however, sometimes acquired in the study of this false science; and in the present degraded state of physical knowledge in this country, it rather evinces a superior mind when a person gives his attention to alchymy.

There is, or was (for I am informed that he died a few weeks ago), a native of Egypt very highly celebrated for his performances in the higher kind of that branch of magic called *er-roo'hia'nee*; the sheykh Isma'ee'l Ab'oo Roo-oo's, of the town of Desoo'ck. Even the more learned and sober of the people of this country



relate most incredible stories of his magical skill ; for which some of them account by asserting his having been married to a *ginnee'yeh* (or female genie) ; and others, merely by his having *ginn* at his service, whom he could mentally consult and command, without making use of any such charm as the lamp of 'Ala' ed-Deen \*. He is said to have always employed this supernatural power either for good or innocent purposes ; and to have been much favoured by the present Ba'sha, who, some say, often consulted him. One of the most sensible of my Moos'lim friends, in this place (Cairo), informs me that he once visited Ab'oo Roo-oo's, at Desoo'ck, in company with the sheykh El-Emee'r, son of the sheykh El-Emee'r El-Kebee'r, sheykh of the sect of the Ma'likees. My friend's companion asked their host to show them some proof of his skill in magic ; and the latter complied with the request. " Let coffee be served to us," said the sheykh El-Emee'r, " in my father's set of *finger's* and *zurf's*, which are at Musr." They waited a few minutes ; and then the coffee was brought ; and the sheykh El-Emee'r looked at the *finger's* and *zurf's*, and said that they were certainly his father's. He was next treated with sherbet, in what he declared himself satisfied were his father's *ckool'leh's*. He then wrote a letter to his father, and, giving it to Ab'oo Roo-oo's, asked him to procure an answer to it. The magician took the letter, placed it behind a cushion of his *deewa'n*, and, a few minutes after, removing the cushion, showed him that this letter was gone, and that another was in its place. The sheykh El-Emee'r took

\* I must be excused for deviating from our old and erroneous mode of spelling the name of the master of " the wonderful lamp." It is vulgarly pronounced 'Ala'y ed-Deen.



the latter; opened and read it; and found in it, in a handwriting which, he said, he could have sworn to be that of his father, a complete answer to what he had written, and an account of the state of his family which he proved, on his return to Cairo, a few days after, to be perfectly true.

A curious case of magic fell under the cognizance of the government during my former visit to this country; and became a subject of general talk and wonder throughout the metropolis. I shall give the story of this occurrence, precisely as it was related to me by several persons in Cairo; without curtailing it of any of the exaggerations with which they embellished it; not only because I am ignorant how far it is true, but because I would show how great a degree of faith the Egyptians in general place in magic, or enchantment.

Moos'tuf'a Ed-Dig'wee, chief secretary in the Cka'dee's court, in this city, was dismissed from his office, and succeeded by another person of the name of Moos'tuf'a, who had been a sey'refee, or money-changer. The former sent a petition to the Ba'sha, begging to be reinstated; but before he received an answer, he was attacked by a severe illness, which he believed to be the effect of enchantment: he persuaded himself that Moos'tuf'a the sey'refee had employed a magician to write a spell which should cause him to die; and therefore sent a second time to the Ba'sha, charging the new secretary with this crime. The accused was brought before the Ba'sha; confessed that he had done so; and named the magician whom he had employed. The latter was arrested; and, not being able to deny the charge brought against him, was thrown into prison, there to remain until it should be seen whether or not



Ed-Dig'wee would die. He was locked up in a small cell; and two soldiers were placed at the door; that one of them might keep watch while the other slept. Now for the marvellous part of the story. At night, after one of the guards had fallen asleep, the other heard a strange, murmuring noise, and, looking through a crack of the door of the cell, saw the magician sitting in the middle of the floor, muttering some words which he (the guard) could not understand. Presently, the candle which was before him became extinguished; and, at the same instant, four other candles appeared; one in each corner of the cell. The magician then rose, and, standing on one side of the cell, knocked his forehead three times against the wall; and each time that he did so, the wall opened, and a man appeared to come forth from it. After the magician had conversed for some minutes with the three personages whom he thus produced, they disappeared; as did, also, the four candles; and the candle that was in the midst of the cell became lighted again, as at first: the magician then resumed his position on the floor; and all was quiet. Thus the spell that was to have killed Ed-Dig'wee was dissolved. Early the next morning, the invalid felt himself so much better, that he called for a basin and ewer, performed the ablution, and said his prayers; and from that time he rapidly recovered. He was restored to his former office; and the magician was banished from Egypt.—Another enchanter (or *sahh'hha'r*) was banished a few days after, for writing a charm which caused a Mohhamadan girl to be affected with an irresistible love for a Copt Christian.

A few days after my first arrival in this country, my curiosity was excited on the subject of magic by a cir-



cumstance related to me by Mr. Salt, our consul-general. Having had reason to believe that one of his servants was a thief, from the fact of several articles of property having been stolen from his house, he sent for a celebrated Mugh'reb'ee magician, with the view of intimidating them, and causing the guilty one (if any of them were guilty) to confess his crime. The magician came; and said that he would cause the exact image of the person who had committed the thefts to appear to any youth not arrived at the age of puberty; and desired the master of the house to call in any boy whom he might choose. As several boys were then employed in a garden adjacent to the house, one of them was called for this purpose. In the palm of this boy's right hand, the magician drew, with a pen, a certain diagram, in the centre of which he poured a little ink. Into this ink, he desired the boy stedfastly to look. He then burned some incense and several bits of paper inscribed with charms; and, at the same time, called for various objects to appear in the ink. The boy declared that he saw all these objects, and, last of all, the image of the guilty person: he described his stature, countenance, and dress: said that he knew him; and directly ran down into the garden, and apprehended one of the labourers, who, when brought before the master, immediately confessed that he was the thief.

The above relation made me desirous of witnessing a similar performance during my first visit to this country; but not being acquainted with the name of the magician here alluded to, or his place of abode, I was unable to obtain any tidings of him. I learned, however, soon after my return to England, that he had become known to later travellers in Egypt; was residing



in Cairo; and that he was called the sheykh 'Abd El-Cka'dir El-Mugh'reb'ee. A few weeks after my second arrival in Egypt, my neighbour 'Osma'n, interpreter of the British consulate, brought him to me; and I fixed a day for his visiting me, to give me a proof of the skill for which he is so much famed. He came at the time appointed, about two hours before noon; but seemed uneasy; frequently looked up at the sky, through the window; and remarked that the weather was unpropitious: it was dull and cloudy; and the wind was boisterous. The experiment was performed with three boys; one after another. With the first, it was partly successful; but with the others, it completely failed. The magician said that he could do nothing more that day; and that he would come in the evening of a subsequent day. He kept his appointment; and admitted that the time was favourable. While waiting for my neighbour, before mentioned, to come and witness the performances, we took pipes and coffee; and the magician chatted with me on indifferent subjects. He is a fine, tall, and stout man, of a rather fair complexion, with a dark brown beard; is shabbily dressed; and generally wears a large green turban; being a descendant of the prophet. In his conversation, he is affable and unaffected. He professed to me that his wonders were effected by the agency of *good* spirits; but to others, he has said the reverse: that his magic is satanic.

In preparing for the experiment of the magic mirror of ink, which, with some other performances of a similar nature, are here termed *durb el-men'del*, the magician first asked me for a reed-pen and ink, a piece of paper, and a pair of scissors; and, having cut off a narrow strip of paper, wrote upon it certain forms of invocation,



together with another charm, by which he professes to accomplish the object of the experiment. He did not attempt to conceal these; and on my asking him to give me copies of them, he readily consented, and immediately wrote them for me; explaining to me, at the same time, that the object he had in view was accomplished through the influence of the two first words, "Tur'shoon" and "Turyoo'shoon," which, he said, were the names of two genii, his "familiar spirits." I compared the copies with the originals; and found that they exactly agreed. Fac-similes of them are here inserted, with a translation.

طربش طربوش انزلوا  
انزلوا احضروا اسماء مذهب  
الامير وجنوده الى الاحمر  
الامير وجنوده احضروا  
يا خدام هذه الاسماء

وهذا الاكشاف فكشفنا عنك  
عناءك فبصرك اليوم  
حديث صحيح

Magic Invocation and Charm

"Tur'shoon ! Turyoo'shoon ! Come down !



Come down ! Be present ! Whither are gone  
the prince and his troops ? Where are El-Ahh'mar  
the prince and his troops ? Be present  
ye servants of these names !”

“ And this is the removal. ‘ And we have removed  
from thee  
thy veil ; and thy sight to-day  
is piercing.’ Correct. correct.”

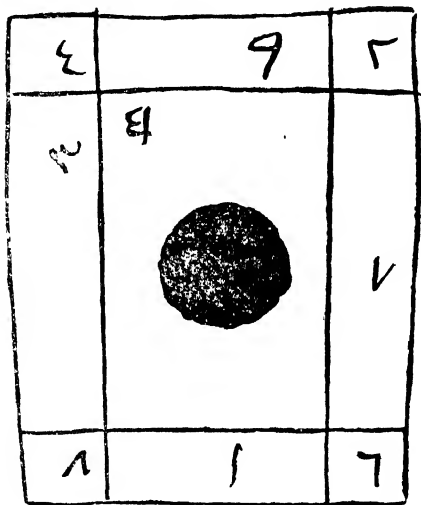
HAVING written these, the magician cut off the paper containing the forms of invocation from that upon which the other charm was written ; and cut the former into six strips. He then explained to me that the object of the latter charm (which contains part of the 21st verse of the *Soo’rat C’ka’f*, or 50th chapter of the *C’koor-a’n*) was to open the boy’s eyes in a supernatural manner ; to make his sight pierce into what is to us the invisible world.

I had prepared, by the magician’s direction, some frankincense and coriander-seed \*, and a chafing-dish with some live charcoal in it. These were now brought into the room, together with the boy who was to be employed : he had been called in, by my desire, from among some boys in the street, returning from a manufactory ; and was about eight or nine years of age. In reply to my inquiry respecting the description of persons who could see in the magic mirror of ink, the magician said that they were a boy not arrived at puberty, a virgin, a black female slave, and a pregnant woman. The chafing-dish was placed before him and the boy ; and the latter was placed on a seat. The magician now desired my servant to put some frankincense and cori-

\* He generally requires some benzoin to be added to these.



ander-seed into the chafing-dish ; then, taking hold of the boy's right hand, he drew, in the palm of it, a magic square, of which a copy is here given. The figures which it contains are Arabic numerals. In the centre,



Magic Diagram and Mirror of Ink

he poured a little ink, and desired the boy to look into it, and to tell him if he could see his face reflected in it ; the boy replied that he saw his face clearly. The magician, holding the boy's hand all the while \*, told him to continue looking intently into the ink ; and not to raise his head.

He then took one of the little strips of paper inscribed with the forms of invocation, and dropped it into the chafing-dish, upon the burning coals and perfumes, which had already filled the room with their

\* This reminds us of animal magnetism.



smoke ; and as he did this, he commenced an indistinct muttering of words, which he continued during the whole process, excepting when he had to ask the boy a question, or to tell him what he was to say. The piece of paper containing the words from the Ckoor-a'n, he placed inside the fore part of the boy's ta'ckee'yeh, or scull-cap. He then asked him if he saw anything in the ink ; and was answered "No?" but about a minute after, the boy, trembling, and seeming much frightened, said, "I see a man sweeping the ground." "When he has done sweeping," said the magician, "tell me." Presently, the boy said, "He has done." The magician then again interrupted his muttering to ask the boy if he knew what a *bey'ruck* (or flag) was ; and, being answered, "Yes," desired him to say, "Bring a flag." The boy did so ; and soon said, "He has brought a flag." "What colour is it?" asked the magician : the boy replied, "Red." He was told to call for another flag ; which he did ; and soon after he said that he saw another brought ; and that it was black. In like manner, he was told to call for a third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh ; which he described as being successively brought before him ; specifying their colours, as white, green, black, red, and blue. The magician then asked him (as he did, also, each time that a new flag was described as being brought), "How many flags have you now before you?" "Seven," answered the boy. While this was going on, the magician put the second and third of the small strips of paper upon which the forms of invocation were written, into the chafing-dish ; and, fresh frankincense and coriander-seed having been repeatedly added, the fumes became painful to the eyes. When the boy had described the



seven flags as appearing to him, he was desired to say, "Bring the Soolta'n's tent; and pitch it." This he did; and in about a minute after, he said, "Some men have brought the tent; a large, green tent: they are pitching it;" and presently he added, "they have set it up." "Now," said the magician, "order the soldiers to come, and to pitch their camp around the tent of the Soolta'n." The boy did as he was desired; and immediately said, "I see a great many soldiers, with their tents: they have pitched the tents." He was then told to order that the soldiers should be drawn up in ranks; and, having done so, he presently said, that he saw them thus arranged. The magician had put the fourth of the little strips of paper into the chafing-dish; and soon after, he did the same with the fifth. He now said, "Tell some of the people to bring a bull." The boy gave the order required, and said, "I see a bull: it is red: four men are dragging it along; and three are beating it." He was told to desire them to kill it, and cut it up, and to put the meat in saucepans, and cook it. He did as he was directed; and described these operations as apparently performed before his eyes. "Tell the soldiers," said the magician, "to eat it." The boy did so; and said, "They are eating it. They have done; and are washing their hands." The magician then told him to call for the Soolta'n; and the boy, having done this, said, "I see the Soolta'n riding to his tent, on a bay horse; and he has, on his head, a high red cap: he has alighted at his tent, and sat down within it." "Desire them to bring coffee to the Soolta'n," said the magician, "and to form the court." These orders were given by the boy; and he said that he saw them performed. The magician had put the last of the



six little strips of paper into the chafing-dish. In his mutterings I distinguished nothing but the words of the written invocation, frequently repeated, excepting on two or three occasions, when I heard him say, "If they demand information, inform them; and be ye veracious."

He now addressed himself to me; and asked me if I wished the boy to see any person who was absent or dead. I named Lord Nelson; of whom the boy had evidently never heard; for it was with much difficulty that he pronounced the name, after several trials. The magician desired the boy to say to the Soolta'n—"My master salutes thee, and desires thee to bring Lord Nelson: bring him before my eyes, that I may see him, speedily." The boy then said so; and almost immediately added, "A messenger is gone, and has returned, and brought a man, dressed in a black \* suit of European clothes: the man has lost his left arm." He then paused for a moment or two; and, looking more intently, and more closely, into the ink, said, "No, he has not lost his left arm; but it is placed to his breast." This correction made his description more striking than it had been without it: since Lord Nelson generally had his empty sleeve attached to the breast of his coat: but it was the *right* arm that he had lost. Without saying that I suspected the boy had made a mistake, I asked the magician whether the objects appeared in the ink as if actually before the eyes, or as if in a glass, which makes the right appear left. He answered, that they appeared as in a mirror. This rendered the boy's description faultless.

\* Dark blue is called, by the modern Egyptians, *es'wed*, which properly signifies *black*, and is therefore so translated here.



The next person I called for was a native of Egypt, who has been for many years resident in England, where he has adopted our dress; and who had been long confined to his bed by illness before I embarked for this country: I thought that his name, one not very uncommon in Egypt, might make the boy describe him incorrectly; though another boy, on the former visit of the magician, had described this same person as wearing a European dress, like that in which I last saw him. In the present case the boy said, "Here is a man brought on a kind of bier, and wrapped up in a sheet." This description would suit, supposing the person in question to be still confined to his bed, or if he be dead\*. The boy described his face as covered; and was told to order that it should be uncovered. This he did; and then said, "His face is pale; and he has mustaches, but no beard:" which is correct.

Several other persons were successively called for; but the boy's descriptions of them were imperfect; though not altogether incorrect. He represented each object as appearing less distinct than the preceding one; as if his sight were gradually becoming dim: he was a minute, or more, before he could give any account of the persons he professed to see towards the close of the performance; and the magician said it was useless to proceed with him. Another boy was then brought in; and the magic square, &c. made in his hand; but he could see nothing. The magician said that he was too old.

\* A few months after this was written, I had the pleasure of hearing that the person here alluded to was in better health. Whether he was confined to his bed at the time when this experiment was performed, I have not been able to ascertain.



Though completely puzzled, I was somewhat disappointed with his performances, for they fell short of what he had accomplished, in many instances, in presence of certain of my friends and countrymen. On one of these occasions, an Englishman present ridiculed the performance, and said that nothing would satisfy him but a correct description of the appearance of his own father, of whom, he was sure, no one of the company had any knowledge. The boy, accordingly, having called by name for the person alluded to, described a man in a Frank dress, of course, with his hand placed to his head, wearing spectacles, and with one foot on the ground, and the other raised behind him, as if he were stepping down from a seat. The description was exactly true in every respect: the peculiar position of the hand was occasioned by an almost constant head-ache; and that of the foot or leg, by a stiff knee, caused by a fall from a horse, in hunting. I am assured that, on this occasion, the boy accurately described each person and thing that was called for. On another occasion, Shakspeare was described with the most minute correctness, both as to person and dress; and I might add several other cases in which the same magician has excited astonishment in the sober minds of Englishmen of my acquaintance. A short time since, after performing in the usual manner, by means of a boy, he prepared the magic mirror in the hand of a young English lady, who, on looking into it for a little while, said that she saw a broom sweeping the ground without anybody holding it, and was so much frightened that she would look no longer.

I have stated these facts partly from my own experience, and partly as they came to my knowledge on the



authority of respectable persons. The reader may be tempted to think, that, in each instance, the boy saw images produced by some reflection in the ink ; but this was evidently not the case ; or that he was a confederate, or guided by leading questions. That there was no confederacy, I satisfactorily ascertained, by selecting the boy who performed the part above described in my presence from a number of others passing by in the street, and by his rejecting a present which I afterwards offered him with the view of inducing him to confess that he did not really see what he had professed to have seen. I tried the veracity of another boy on a subsequent occasion in the same manner ; and the result was the same. The experiment often entirely fails ; but when the boy employed is right in one case, he generally is so in all : when he gives, at first, an account altogether wrong, the magician usually dismisses him at once, saying that he is too old. The perfumes, or excited imagination, or fear, may be supposed to affect the vision of the boy who describes objects as appearing to him in the ink ; but, if so, why does he see exactly what is required, and objects of which he can have had no previous particular notion ? Neither I nor others have been able to discover any clue by which to penetrate the mystery ; and if the reader be alike unable to give the solution, I hope that he will not allow the above account to induce in his mind any degree of scepticism with respect to other portions of this work.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## CHARACTER.

THE natural or innate character of the modern Egyptians is altered, in a remarkable degree, by their religion, laws, and government, as well as by the climate and other causes; and to form a just opinion of it is, therefore, very difficult. We may, however, confidently state, that they are endowed, in a higher degree than most other people, with some of the more important mental qualities, particularly, quickness of apprehension, a ready wit, and a retentive memory. In youth, they generally possess these and other intellectual powers; but the causes above alluded to gradually lessen their mental energy.

Of the leading features of their character, none is more remarkable than their religious pride. They regard persons of every other faith as the children of perdition; and such, the Moos'lim is early taught to despise\*. It is written in the Ckoor-a'n, "O ye who have become believers, take not the Jews or Christians for your friends: they are friends, one to another; but whosoever of you taketh them for his friends, he, surely, is one of them†." From motives of politeness, or

\* I am credibly informed that children in Egypt are often taught, at school, a regular set of curses to denounce upon the persons and property of Christians, Jews, and all other unbelievers in the religion of Mohham'mad.

† Chap. v., ver. 56.



selfish interest, these people will sometimes talk with apparent liberality of sentiment, and even make professions of friendship, to a Christian (particularly to a European), whom, in their hearts, they condemn: but as the Moos'lims of Egypt judge of the Franks in general from the majority of those in their towns, some of whom are outcasts from their native countries, and others, men under no moral restraint, they are hardly to be blamed for despising them. The Christians are, however, generally treated with civility by the people of Egypt: the Moos'lims being as remarkable for their toleration as for their contempt of unbelievers.

It is considered the highest honour, among the Moos'lims, to be religious; but the desire to appear so leads many into hypocrisy and pharisaical ostentation. When a Moos'lim is unoccupied by business or amusement or conversation, he is often heard to utter some pious ejaculation. If a wicked thought, or the remembrance of a wicked action that he has committed, trouble him, he sighs forth, "I beg forgiveness of God, the Great \*!" The shop-keeper, when not engaged with customers, nor enjoying his pipe, often employs himself, in the sight and hearing of the passengers in the street, in reciting a chapter of the Ckoor-a'n, or in repeating to himself those expressions in praise of God which often follow the ordinary prayers, and are counted with the beads; and in the same public manner he prays.—The Moos'lims frequently swear by God (but not irreverently); and also, by the Prophet, and by the head, or beard, of the person they address. When one is told anything that excites his surprise and disbelief, he generally exclaims, "*wa-l'lah?*" or, "*wa-lla'hi?*" (by

\* *Astugh'fir Alla'h cl-'Azee'm.*



God ?) ; and the other replies, "*wa-lla'hi !*" — As on ordinary occasions before eating and drinking, so, also, on taking medicine, commencing a writing or any important undertaking, and before many a trifling act, it is their habit to say, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful ;" and after the act, "Praise be to God." — When two persons make any considerable bargain, they recite together the first chapter of the Ckoor-a'n (the Fa't'hah). In case of a debate on any matter of business or of opinion, it is common for one of the parties, or a third person who may wish to settle the dispute, or to cool the disputants, to exclaim, "Blessing on the Prophet \*!" — "O God, favour him †!" is said,

a low voice, by the other or others ; and they then continue the argument ; but generally with moderation.

Religious ejaculations often interrupt conversation upon trivial and even licentious subjects, in Egyptian society ; sometimes, in such a manner that a person not well acquainted with the character of this people would perhaps imagine that they intended to make religion a jest. In many of their most indecent songs, the name of God is frequently introduced ; and this is certainly done without any profane motive, but from the habit of often mentioning the name of the Deity in vain, and of praising Him on every trifling occasion of surprise, or in testimony of admiration of anything uncommon. Thus, a libertine, describing his impressions on the first sight of a charming girl (in one of the grossest songs I have ever seen or heard even in the Arabic language), exclaims, "Extolled be He who formed thee, O full

\* *Es-sal'ah 'a-n-neb'ee* (for — *'al'a-n-neb'ee*) ; or "Bless ye (or bless thou) the Prophet !" — *Sal'loo* (or *sal'lee*) *'a-n-neb'ee*.

† *Alla'hoom* (for *Alla'hoom'ma*) *sal'lee 'u'ey'h*.



moon!"—and this and many similar expressions are common in many other songs and odes: but what is most remarkable in the song particularly alluded to above is a profane comparison with which it terminates. I shall adduce, as an example of the strange manner in which licentiousness and religion are often blended together in vulgar Egyptian poetry and rhyming prose, a translation of the last three stanzas of an ode on love and wine:—

"She granted me a reception, the graceful of form, after her distance and coyness. I kissed her teeth and her cheek; and the cup rang in her hand. The odours of musk and ambergris were diffused by a person whose form surpassed the elegance of a straight and slender branch. She spread a bed of brocade; and I passed the time in uninterrupted happiness. A Turkish fawn enslaved me.

"Now I beg forgiveness of God, my Lord, for all my faults and sins; and for all that my heart hath said. My members testify against me. Whenever grief oppresses me, O Lord, Thou art my hope from whatever afflicts me. Thou knowest what I say, and what I think. Thou art the Bountiful, the Forgiving! I implore thy protection: then pardon me.

"And I praise that benignant being\* whom a cloud was wont to shade; the comely: how great was his comeliness! He will intercede for us on the day of judgment, when his haters, the vile, the polytheists, shall be repentant. Would that I might always, as long as I live, accompany the pilgrims, to perform the circuits and worship and courses, and live in uninterrupted happiness!"

In translating the first of the above stanzas, I have

\* The Prophet.



substituted the feminine for the masculine pronoun : for, in the original, the former is meant, though the latter is used ; as is commonly the case in similar compositions of the Egyptians.—One of my Moos'lim friends having just called on me, after my writing the above remarks, I read to him the last four stanzas of this ode ; and asked him if he considered it proper thus to mix up religion with debauchery. He answered, “ Perfectly proper : a man relates his having committed sins ; and then prays to God for forgiveness, and blesses the Prophet.”—“ But,” said I, “ this is an ode written to be chanted for the amusement of persons who take pleasure in unlawful indulgences : and see here, when I close the leaves, the page which celebrates a debauch comes in contact, face to face, with that upon which are written the names of the Deity : the commemoration of the pleasures of sin is placed upon the prayer for forgiveness.” “ That is nonsense,” replied my friend : “ turn the book over : place that side upwards which is now downwards ; and then the case will be the reverse ; sin covered by forgiveness : and God, whose name be exalted, hath said in the Excellent Book, ‘ Say, O my servants who have transgressed against your own souls, despair not of the mercy of God ; seeing that God forgiveth all sins : for He is the Forgiving ; the Merciful\*.’ ”—His answer reminds me of what I have often observed, that the generality of Moos'lims, a most inconsistent people, are every day breaking their law in some point or other, trusting that two words (“ Astugh'fir Alla'h,” or “ I beg forgiveness of God”) will cancel every transgression. He had a copy of the Ckoor-a'n in his hand ; and on my turning it over to look for the verse he had quoted, I found in it

\* Ckoor-a'n, chap. xxxix., ver. 54.



a scrap of paper containing some words from the venerated volume: he was about to burn this piece of paper, lest it should fall out, and be trodden upon; and on my asking him whether it was allowable to do so, he answered, that it might either be burnt, or thrown into running water; but that it was better to burn it, as the words would ascend in the flames, and be conveyed by angels to heaven.—Sometimes the C'koor-a'n is quoted in jest, even by persons of strict religious principles. For instance, the following equivocal and evasive answer was once suggested to me on a person's asking of me a present of a watch, which, I must previously mention, is called "sa'ah," a word which signifies an "hour," and the "period of the general judgment:"—"Verily, the *sa'ah* shall come: I will surely make it to appear" (chap. xx., ver. 15).

There are often met with, in Egyptian society, persons who will introduce an apposite quotation from the C'koor-a'n or the Traditions of the Prophet in common conversation, whatever be the topic; and an interruption of this kind is not considered, as it would be in general society in our own country, either hypocritical or annoying; but rather occasions expressions, if not feelings, of admiration; and often diverts the hearers from a trivial subject to matters of a more serious nature. The Moos'lims of Egypt, and, I believe, those of other countries, are generally fond of conversing on religion; and the most prevalent mode of entertaining a party of guests among the higher and middle ranks in this place (Cairo) is the recital of a *khut'meh* (or the whole of the C'koor-a'n), which is chanted by fick'ees, hired for the purpose; or the performance of a *zikk*, which has been before mentioned. Few persons among them would venture



to say, that they prefer hearing a concert of music to the performance of a *khut'meh* or *zikh*; and they certainly do take great pleasure in the latter performances. The manner in which the *Ckoor-a'n* is sometimes chanted is, indeed, very pleasing; though I must say, that a complete *khut'meh* is, to me, extremely tiresome. With the religious zeal of the *Moos'lims*, I am daily struck: yet I have often wondered that they so seldom attempt to make converts to their faith. On my expressing my surprise, as I have frequently done, at their indifference with respect to the propagation of their religion, contrasting it with the conduct of their ancestors of the early ages of *El-Islam*, I have generally been answered—"Of what use would it be if I could convert a thousand infidels? Would it increase the number of the faithful? By no means: the number of the faithful is decreed by God; and no act of man can increase or diminish it." The contending against such an answer would have led to an interminable dispute: so I never ventured a reply. I have heard quoted, by way of apology for their neglecting to make proselytes, the following words of the *Ckoor-a'n*: "Dispute not against those who have received the Scriptures\*" (namely, the Christians and Jews), without the words immediately following—"unless in the mildest manner; except against such of them as behave injuriously [towards you]: and say [unto them] we believe in [the revelation] that hath been sent down unto us, and [also in that] which hath been sent down unto you: and our God and your God is one." This precept is, however, generally considered as abrogated by that of the sword: if it were acted upon by the *Moos'lims*, it might perhaps lead to disputes

\* Chap. xxix., ver. 45.



which would make them more liberal-minded, and much better informed.

The respect which most modern Moos'lims pay to their Prophet is almost idolatrous. They very frequently swear by him ; and many of the most learned, as well as the ignorant, often implore his intercession. Pilgrims are generally much more affected on visiting his tomb than in performing any other religious rite. There are some Moos'lims who will not do anything that the Prophet is not recorded to have done ; and who particularly abstain from eating anything that he did not eat, though its lawfulness be undoubted. The Ima'm Ahh'mad Ib'n Hham'bal would not even eat water-melons, because, although he knew that the Prophet ate them, he could not learn whether he ate them with or without the rind, or whether he broke, bit, or cut them : and he forbad a woman, who questioned him as to the propriety of the act, to spin by the light of torches passing in the street by night, which were not her own property, because the Prophet had not mentioned whether it was lawful to do so, and was not known to have ever availed himself of a light belonging to another person, without that person's leave. I once, admiring some very pretty pipe-bowls, asked the maker why he did not stamp them with his name. He answered " God forbid ! My name is Ahh'mad " (one of the names of the Prophet) : " would you have me put it in the fire ?"—I have heard adduced as one of the subjects of complaint against the present Ba'sha, his causing the camels and horses of the government to be branded with his names of " Mohham'mad 'Al'ee." " In the first place," said a friend of mine, who mentioned this fact to me, " the iron upon which are engraved these names, names which ought to be so



much venerated, the names of the Prophet (God favour and preserve him !), and his Nephew (may God be well pleased with him !), is put into the fire, which is shocking : then it is applied to the neck of a camel ; and causes blood, which is impure, to flow, and to pollute the sacred names both upon the iron and upon the animal's skin : and when the wound is healed, how probable is it, and almost certain and unavoidable, that the camel will, when he lies down, lay his neck upon something unclean."

A similar feeling is the chief reason why the Moos'lims object to printing their books. They have scarcely a book (I do not remember to have seen one) that does not contain the name of God : it is a rule among them to commence every book with the words " In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," and to begin the preface or introduction by praising God, and blessing the Prophet ; and they fear some impurity might be contracted by the ink that is applied to the name of the Deity, in the process of printing, or by the paper to be impressed with that sacred name, and perhaps with words taken from the Ckoor-a'n : they fear, also, that their books, becoming very cheap by being printed, would fall into the hands of infidels ; and are much shocked at the idea of using a brush composed of hogs' hair (which was at first done here) to apply the ink to the name, and often to the words, of God. Hence, books have hitherto been printed in Egypt only by order of the government : but two or three persons have lately applied for, and received, permission to make use of the government-press. I am acquainted with a bookseller here who has long been desirous of printing some books which he feels sure would bring him considerable profit ; but cannot overcome his scruples as to the lawfulness of doing so.



The honour which the Moos'lims show to the Ckoor-a'n is very striking. They generally take care never to hold it, or suspend it, in such a manner as that it shall be below the girdle; and they deposit it upon a high and clean place; and never put another book, or anything else, on the top of it. On quoting from it, they usually say, "He whose name be exalted" (or "God, whose name be exalted") "hath said, in the Excellent Book." They consider it extremely improper that the sacred volume should be touched by a Christian or a Jew, or any other person not a believer in its doctrines; though some of them are induced, by covetousness, but very rarely, to sell copies of it to such persons. It is even forbidden to the Moos'lim to touch it unless he be in a state of legal purity; and hence, these words of the book itself—"None shall touch it but those who are clean \*"—are often stamped upon the cover. The same remarks apply, also, to anything upon which is inscribed a passage of the Ckoor-a'n. It is remarkable, however, that most of the old Arab coins bear inscriptions of words from the Ckoor-a'n, or else the testimony of the faith ("There is no deity but God: Mohham'mad is God's Apostle"); notwithstanding they were intended for the use of Jews and Christians, as well as Moos'lims: but I have heard this practice severely condemned.—On my once asking one of my Moos'lim friends whether figs were esteemed wholesome in Egypt, he answered, "Is not the fig celebrated in the Ckoor-a'n? God swears by it: 'By the fig and the olive!'" (chap. xcv., ver. 1).

There is certainly much enthusiastic piety in the character of the modern Moos'lims, notwithstanding their

\* Ckoor-a'n, chap. lvi., ver. 78.



inconsistencies and superstitions : such, at least, is generally the case. There are, I believe, very few professed Moos'lims who are really unbelievers ; and these dare not openly declare their unbelief. I have heard of two or three such, who have been rendered so by long and intimate intercourse with Europeans ; and have met with one materialist, who has often had long discussions with me. In preceding chapters of this work, several practices indicative of the religious feeling which prevails among the Moos'lims of Egypt have been incidentally mentioned. Religious appeals are generally used by the beggars in this country : some examples of these will be given hereafter. Of a similar nature, also, are the cries of many of the persons who sell vegetables, &c. The cry of the nightly watchman in the quarter in which I lived in Cairo during my first visit struck me as remarkable for its beauty and sublimity—"I proclaim the absolute glory of the living King, who sleepeth not nor dieth\*." The present watchman, in the same quarter, exclaims, "O Lord ! .O Everlasting† !" Many other illustrations of the religious character of the people whom I am endeavouring to portray might be added. I must, however, here acknowledge, that religion has much declined among them and most others of the same faith. Whoever has been in the habit of conversing familiarly with the modern Moos'lims, must often have heard them remark, with a sigh, "It is the end of time!"—"The world has fallen into infidelity."—They are convinced that the present state of their religion is a proof that the end of the world is near. The mention which I have made, in a former chapter, of some of the

\* *Soobhha'n el-mel'ik el-hhei' el-lez'ee la' yena'm wel'a yemoo't !*

† *Ya' rubb ! Ya' da'im.*



tenets of the Wah'ha'bees, as being those of the primitive Moos'lins, shows how much the generality of the modern professors of the faith of the Ckoor-a'n have deviated from the precepts originally delivered to its disciples.

Influenced by their belief in predestination, the men display, in times of distressing uncertainty, an exemplary patience, and after any afflicting event, a remarkable degree of resignation and fortitude, approaching nearly to apathy\*; generally exhibiting their sorrow only by a sigh, and the exclamation of *A'llah keree'm!* (God is bountiful!): but the women, on the contrary, give vent to their grief by the most extravagant cries and shrieks. While the Christian blames himself for every untoward event which he thinks he has brought upon himself, or might have avoided, the Moos'lim enjoys a remarkable serenity of mind in all the vicissitudes of life. When he sees his end approaching, his resignation is still conspicuous: he exclaims, "Verily to God we belong; and verily to Him we return!" and to those who inquire respecting his state, in general his reply is, "Praise be to God! Our Lord is bountiful!"—His belief in predestination does not, however, prevent his taking any step to attain an object that he may have in view; not being perfectly absolute, or unconditional: nor does it in general make him careless of avoiding danger; for he thinks himself forbidden to do so by these words of the Ckoor-a'n †, "Throw not [yourselves] with your

\* They are not, however, so apathetic as some travellers have supposed; for it is not uncommon to see them weep; and such a demonstration of feeling is not considered by them as unmanly: even heroes are frequently represented, in their romances and histories, as weeping under heavy affliction.

† Chap. ii., ver. 191.



hands into perdition;" excepting in some cases; as in those of pestilence and other sicknesses; being commanded, by the Prophet, not to go into a city where there is a pestilence, nor to come out from it. The lawfulness of quarantine is contested among Moos'lims; but the generality of them condemn it.

The same belief in predestination renders the Moos'lim utterly devoid of presumption with regard to his future actions, or to any future events. He never speaks of anything that he intends to do, or of any circumstance which he expects and hopes may come to pass, without adding, "if it be the will of God \*;" and, in like manner, in speaking of a past event of which he is not certain, he generally prefaces or concludes what he says with the expression "God is all-knowing †."

Benevolence and charity to the poor are virtues which the Egyptians possess in an eminent degree, and which are instilled into their hearts by religion; but from their own profession it appears that they are as much excited to the giving of alms by the expectation of enjoying corresponding rewards in heaven, as by pity for the distresses of their fellow-creatures, or a disinterested wish to do the will of God. It may be attributed, in some measure, to the charitable disposition of the inhabitants, that beggars are so numerous in Cairo. The many handsome *Sebee'ls*, or public fountains (buildings erected and endowed for the gratuitous supply of water to passengers), which are seen in this city, and the more humble structures of the same kind in the villages and fields, are monuments of the same virtue.

In my earlier intercourse with the people of Egypt, I was much pleased at observing their humanity to dumb

\* *In-sha-l'lah.*

† *Alla'hoo a'alam.*



animals; to see a person, who gathered together the folds of his loose clothes to prevent their coming in contact with a dog, throw, to the impure animal, a portion of the bread which he was eating. Murders, burglaries, and other atrocious crimes, were then very rare among them. Now, however, I find the generality of the Egyptians very much changed for the worse, with respect to their humanity to brutes and to their fellow-creatures. The increased severity of the government seems, as might be expected, to have engendered tyranny, and an increase of every crime, in the people. It is shocking to see the miserable asses which are used for carrying dust, &c. in Cairo; many of them with large crimson wounds, like carbuncles, constantly chafed by rough ropes of the fibres of the palm-tree which are attached to the back part of the pack-saddle. The dogs in the streets are frequently beaten, both by boys and men, from mere wantonness; and I often see children amusing themselves with molesting the cats, which were formerly much favoured\*. Robberies and murders, during two or three months after my last arrival here, were occurrences of almost every week. Most of the Turkish governors of districts used to exercise great

\* I think it proper to remark here, that I have good reason for believing Burckhardt to have been misinformed when stating (see his Arabic Proverbs, No. 393) that children in the East (in Egypt, &c.) torture serpents by putting them into a leather bag, then throwing unslaked lime upon them, and pouring water on it. I find no one who has heard of such cruelty; and it is not likely that boys in this country would dare to put a serpent in a bag (for they are excessively afraid of this reptile), or would give several piasters for a bag to destroy in this manner. The proverb upon which this statement is founded perhaps alludes to a mode of destroying serpents; but not for sport.



oppression over the fella'hhee'n; but since persons of the latter class have been put in the places of the former they have exceeded their predecessors in tyranny; and it is a common remark, that they are "more execrable than the Turks\*."

Though I now frequently see the houseless dogs beaten in the streets of Cairo, and that when quite inoffensive and quiet, I still often observe men feeding them with bread, &c.; and the persons who do so are mostly poor men. In every district of this city are many small troughs, which are daily replenished with water for the dogs. In each street where there are shops, a sack'cka receives a small monthly sum from each shopman for sprinkling the street, and filling the trough or troughs for the dogs in that street. There is also a dogs'-trough under almost every shop of a shurbet'lee, or seller of sherbets.—It may here be mentioned, that the dogs of Cairo, few of which have masters, compose regular and distinct tribes; and the dogs of each tribe confine themselves to a certain district or quarter, from which they invariably chase away any strange dog that may venture to intrude. These animals are very numerous in Cairo. They are generally careful to avoid coming in contact with the men; as if they knew that the majority of the people of the city regarded them as unclean: but they often bark at persons in the Frank dress; and at night, they annoy every passenger. They are of use in eating the offal thrown

\* "The oppression of the Turks, rather than the justice of the Arabs," is a proverb often heard from the mouth of the Arab peasant; who, in this case, applies the term "Arabs" to his own class, instead of the Bed'aweas, to whom it properly belongs. See Burckhardt's "Arabic Proverbs," No. 176.



out from the butchers' shops, and from houses. Many dogs also prowl about the mounds of rubbish around the metropolis; and these, with the vultures, feed upon the carcasses of the camels, asses, &c., that die in the town. They are mostly of a sandy colour; and seem to partake of the form and disposition of the jackal.

The general opinion of the Moos'lims, which holds the dog to be unclean, does not prevent their keeping this animal as a house-guard, and sometimes even as a pet. A curious case of this kind occurred a short time ago. A woman in this city, who had neither husband nor child nor friend to solace her, made a dog her companion. Death took this only associate from her; and, in her grief and her affection for it, she determined to bury it; and not merely to commit it to the earth without ceremony, but to inter it as a Moos'lim, in a respectable tomb, in the cemetery of the Ima'm Esh-Sha'fe'ee, which is regarded as especially sacred. She washed the dog according to the rules prescribed to be observed in the case of a deceased Moos'lim, wrapped it in handsome grave-clothes, sent for a bier, and put it in; then hired several wailing-women; and, with them, performed a regular lamentation. This done (but not without exciting the wonder of her neighbours, who could not conjecture what person in her house was dead, yet would not intrude, because she never associated with them), she hired a number of chanters, to head the funeral-procession, and school-boys, to sing, and carry the Ckoor-a'n before the bier; and the train went forth in respectable order; herself and the hired wailing-women following the bier, and rending the air with their shrieks: but the procession had not advanced many steps, when one of the female neighbours ventured to



ask the afflicted lady who the person was that was dead ; and was answered, "It is my poor child." The enquirer charged her with uttering a falsehood ; and the bereaved lady confessed that it was her dog ; begging, at the same time, that her inquisitive neighbour would not divulge the secret ; but, for an Egyptian woman to keep a secret, and such a secret, was impossible : it was immediately made known to the by-standers ; and a mob, in no good humour, soon collected, and put a stop to the funeral. The chanters and the singing-boys and wailing-women vented their rage against their employer (as soon as they had secured their money) for having made fools of them ; and if the police had not interfered, she would probably have fallen a victim to popular fury\*.

It is a curious fact, that, in Cairo, houseless cats are fed at the expense of the Cka'dee ; or, rather, almost wholly at his expense. Every afternoon, a quantity of offal is brought into the great court before the Mahh'-kem'eh ; and the cats are called together to eat. The Soolta'n Ez-Za'hîr Beybur's (as I learn from the Ba'sh Ka'tib of the Cka'dee) bequeathed a garden, which is called *gheyt el-ckool'tah* (or the garden of the cat), near his mosque, on the north of Cairo, for the benefit of the cats : but this garden has been sold, over and over again, by the trustees and purchasers : the former

\* D'Herbelot mentions a somewhat similar case, in which a Turk, having buried a favourite dog, with some marks of respect, in his garden, was accused, before the Cka'dee, of having interred the animal with the ceremonies practised at the burial of a Moos'-lim, and escaped punishment (perhaps a severe one) by informing the judge that his dog had made a will, leaving to him (the Cka'dee) a sum of money.—(Bibliothèque Orientale, art. Cadhi.)



sold it, on pretence of its being too much out of order to be rendered productive, excepting at a considerable expense; and it now produces only a *hhekr* (or quit-rent) of fifteen piasters a year, to be applied to the maintenance of the destitute cats. Almost the whole expense of their support has, in consequence, fallen upon the Cka'dee, who, by reason of his office, is the guardian of this and all other charitable and pious legacies, and must suffer for the neglect of his predecessors. Latterly, however, the duty of feeding the cats has been very inadequately performed. Many persons in Cairo, when they wish to get rid of a cat, send or take it to the Cka'dee's house, and let it loose in the great court.

The affability of the Egyptians towards each other has been mentioned in a preceding chapter. Towards foreigners who do not conform with their manners and customs, and profess the same way of thinking, they are polite in their address, but cold and reserved, or parasitical, in conversation. With such persons, and even among themselves, they often betray much impertinent curiosity. They are generally extremely afraid of making to themselves enemies; and this fear frequently induces them to uphold each other, even when it is criminal to do so.

Cheerfulness is another remarkable characteristic of this people. Some of them profess a great contempt for frivolous amusements; but most take pleasure in such pastimes; and it is surprising to see how easily they are amused: wherever there are crowds, noise, and bustle, they are delighted. In their public festivals, there is little to amuse a person of good education; but the Egyptians enjoy them as much as we do the best of our entertainments. Those of the lower orders seem to



be extremely happy with their pipes and coffee, after the occupations of the day, in the society of the coffee-shop.

Hospitality is a virtue for which the natives of the East in general are highly and deservedly admired; and the people of Egypt are well entitled to commendation on this account. A word which signifies literally "a person on a journey" (*moosa'fir*) is the term most commonly employed in this country in the sense of a visitor or guest. There are very few persons here who would think of sitting down to a meal, if there were a stranger in the house, without inviting him to partake of it, unless the latter were a menial; in which case, he would be invited to eat with the servants. It would be considered a shameful violation of good manners if a Moos'lim abstained from ordering the table to be prepared at the usual time because a visitor happened to be present. Persons of the middle classes in this country, if living in a retired situation, sometimes take their supper before the door of their house, and invite every passenger of respectable appearance to eat with them. This is very commonly done among the lower orders. In cities and large towns, claims on hospitality are unfrequent; as there are many *weka'lehs*, or *kha'ns*, where strangers may obtain lodging; and food is very easily procured: but in the villages, travellers are often lodged and entertained by the Sheykh or some other inhabitant; and if the guest be a person of the middle or higher classes, or even not very poor, he gives a present to his host's servants, or to the host himself. In the desert, however, a present is seldom received from a guest.—The account of Abraham's entertaining the three angels, related in the Bible, presents a perfect pic-



ture of the manner in which a modern Bed'awee sheykh receives travellers arriving at his encampment. He immediately orders his wife or women to make bread; slaughters a sheep or some other animal, and dresses it in haste; and bringing milk and any other provisions that he may have ready at hand, with the bread, and the meat which he has dressed, sets them before his guests. If these be persons of high rank, he stands by them while they eat; as Abraham did in the case above alluded to. Most Bed'awees will suffer almost any injury to themselves or their families rather than allow their guests to be ill-treated while under their protection. There are Arabs who even regard the chastity of their wives as not too precious to be sacrificed for the gratification of their guests\*; and at an encampment of the Bish'a'ree'n, I ascertained that there are many persons in this great tribe, which inhabits a large portion of the desert between the Nile and the Red Sea, who offer their unmarried daughters to their guests, merely from motives of hospitality, and not for hire.

There used to be, in Cairo, a numerous class of persons called *Toof'cy'lee'yeh*, or *Toofey'lees* (that is, Spungers), who, taking advantage of the hospitality of their countrymen, subsisted entirely by spunging: but this class has, of late, very much decreased in number. Wherever there was an entertainment, some of these worthies were almost sure to be found; and it was only by a present of money that they could be induced to retire from the company. They even travelled about the country, without the smallest coin in their pockets, intruding themselves into private houses whenever they

\* See Burckhardt's Notes on the Bedouins, &c., 8vo. edition vol. i., pp. 179 and 180.



wanted a meal, or practising various tricks for this purpose. Two of them, I was told, a little while since, determined to go to the festival of the seyde El-Bed'awee, at Tun'ta; an easy journey of two days and a-half from Cairo. Walking at their leisure, they arrived at the small town of Ckalyoo'b at the end of their first day's journey; and there found themselves at a loss for a supper. One of them went to the Cka'dee; and, after saluting him, said—"O Cka'dee, I am a traveller from the Shurckee'yeh, going to Musr; and I have a companion who owes me fifty purses, which he has with him at present, and refuses to give me; and I am actually in want of them." "Where is he?" said the Cka'dee. "Here, in this town," answered the complainant. The Cka'dee sent a rasoo'l to bring the accused; and in the meantime, expecting considerable fees for a judgment in such a case, ordered a good supper to be prepared; which Cka'dees of country towns or villages generally do under similar circumstances. The two men were invited to sup and sleep before the case was tried. Next morning, the parties were examined: the accused admitted that he had in his possession the fifty purses of his companion; and said that he was ready to give them up; for they were an encumbrance to him; being only the paper purses in which coffee was sold. "We are Toofey'lees"—he added; and the Cka'dee, in anger, dismissed them.

The natives of Egypt in general, in common with the Arabs of other countries, are justly chargeable with a fault which is regarded by us as one of great magnitude: it is want of gratitude. This I am inclined to consider a relic of the Bed'awee character; and as arising from the very common practice of hospitality and



generosity, and from the prevailing opinion that these virtues are absolute duties which it would be disgraceful to neglect.

The temperance and moderation of the Egyptians, with regard to diet, are very exemplary. Since my first arrival in Egypt, I have scarcely ever seen a native of this country in a state of intoxication; unless it were a musician at an entertainment, or a dancing girl, or low prostitute. It hardly need be added that they are extremely frugal. They show a great respect for bread, as the staff of life\*, and on no account suffer the smallest portion of it to be wasted, if they can avoid it. I have often observed an Egyptian take up a small piece of bread, which had, by accident, fallen in the street or road, and, after putting it before his lips and forehead three times, place it on one side, in order that a dog might eat it, rather than let it remain to be trodden under foot. The following instance of the excessive and unreasonable respect of the Egyptians for bread has been related to me by several persons; but I must say that I think it hardly credible.—Two servants were sitting at the door of their master's house, eating their dinner, when they observed a Memloo'k Bey, with several of his officers, riding along the street towards them. One of these servants rose, from respect to the grandee, who, regarding him with indignation, exclaimed, "Which is the more worthy of respect, the bread that is before you, or myself?"—Without waiting for a reply, he made, it is said, a well-understood signal with his hand; and the unintended offender was beheaded on the spot.

\* The name which they give to it is *'eysh*, which literally signifies *life*.



The higher and middle orders of Moos'lims in Egypt are scrupulously cleanly ; and the lower orders are more so than in most other countries : but were not cleanliness a point of their religion, perhaps it would not be so much regarded by them. From what has been said in a former chapter of this work, it appears that we must not judge of them, with respect to this quality, from the dirty state in which they generally leave their children. Their religious ablutions were, certainly, very wisely ordained ; personal cleanliness being so conducive to health in a hot climate. The Egyptians in general are particularly careful to avoid whatever their religion has pronounced unclean and polluting. One of their objections against wine is, that it is unclean ; and I believe that very few of them, if any, could be induced by any means, unless by a considerable bribe, to eat the smallest piece of pig's flesh ; excepting the peasants of the Bo-hhey'reh (the province on the west of the western branch of the Nile), many of whom eat the flesh of the wild boar, and rats\*. I was once amused with the remark of a Moos'lim, on the subject of pork : he observed that the Franks were certainly a much calumniated people : that it was well known they were in the habit of eating swine's flesh ; but that some slanderous persons here asserted that it was not only the flesh of the unclean beast that was eaten by the Franks, but also its skin, and its entrails, and its very blood : on being answered that the accusation was too true, he burst forth with a most hearty curse upon the infidels, devoting them to the lowest place in hell.

\* Dogs, too, are eaten by many Mugh'reb'ees settled at Alexandria, and by descendants of the same people ; of whom there are also a few in Cairo, in the quarter of Teyloo'n.



Many of the butchers who supply the Moos'lim inhabitants of the metropolis with meat are Jews. A few years ago, one of the principal 'ool'ama here complained of this fact to the Ba'sha; and begged him to put a stop to it. Another of the 'ool'ama, hearing that this person had gone to make the complaint above mentioned, followed him, and urged, before the Ba'sha, that the practice was not unlawful. "Adduce your proof" said the former. "Here," answered the other, "is my proof, from the word of God—'Eat of that whereon the name of God hath been commemorated \*.' " The chief of the Jewish butchers was then summoned, and asked whether he said anything previously to slaughtering an animal: he answered, "Yes: we always say, as the Moos'lins, 'In the name of God! God is most great!' and we never kill an animal in any other way than by cutting its throat."—The complaint was consequently dismissed.

A few days ago, a man, purchasing a fatee'reh of a baker in this city, saw him take out of his oven a dish of pork which he had been baking for a Frank; and, supposing that the other things in the oven might have been in contact with the unclean meat, and thus contaminated, immediately brought a soldier from the nearest guard-house, and caused the baker (who was in no slight alarm, and protested that he was ignorant of there being any pig's flesh in his oven) to be conducted before the Za'bit. This magistrate considered the case of sufficient importance to be referred to the Ba'sha's deewa'n; and the president of this council regarded it as of too serious and difficult a nature for him to decide, and accordingly sent the accused to be judged at the

\* Ckoor-a'n, chap. vi., ver. 118.



Mahh'kem'eh. The Cka'dee desired the opinion of the Moof'tee, who gave the following sentence:—That all kinds of food not essentially or radically impure were purified, of any pollution which they might have contracted, by fire; and consequently, that whatever thing of this description was in the oven, even if it had been in contact with the pork, was clean as soon as it had been baked.

A short time since, the Ba'sha received, from Europe, a set of mattresses and cushions stuffed with horse-hair, to form a deewa'n for his hharee'm. The ladies opened one of the cushions, to ascertain what was the substance which rendered them so agreeably elastic; and, disgusted in the highest degree at seeing what they supposed to be hog's-hair, insisted upon throwing away the whole deewa'n.

A Frenchman who was employed here, a few years ago, to refine sugar, by the present Ba'sha, made use of blood for this purpose; and since that, very few of the people of this country have ventured to eat any sugar made by the Franks: the Ba'sha was also obliged to prohibit the use of blood in his own sugar-bakeries; and the white of eggs has been employed in its stead. Some of the Egyptians, seeing the European sugar to be very superior to that made here, use it; holding the doctrine that what is originally clean may become clean again after pollution; but I am obliged to keep the coarse Egyptian sugar for the purpose of making sherbet for my visitors; some of whom hold long discussions with me on this subject.

It is a general custom among the Egyptians, after washing clothes, to pour clean water upon them, and to say, in doing so, "I testify that there is no deity but



God ; and I testify that Mohham'mad is God's Apostle\*." In speaking of their religion, I have mentioned several other practices instituted for the sake of cleanliness ; most of which are universally observed. But, notwithstanding these cleanly practices and principles, and their custom of frequently going to the bath, the Egyptians do not change their linen so often as some people of more northern climates, who need not so much to do this frequently : they often go to the bath in a dirty shirt ; and, after a thorough washing, put on the same again.

Filial piety is one of the more remarkable virtues of this people. The outward respect which they pay to their parents, I have already had occasion to mention. Great respect is also shown by the young to those far advanced in age† ; particularly to such as are reputed men of great piety or learning.

Love of their country is another predominant characteristic of the modern Egyptians. In general, they have a great dread of quitting their native land. I have heard of several determining to visit a foreign country, for the sake of considerable advantages in prospect ; but when the time of their intended departure drew near, their resolution failed them. Severe oppression has lately lessened this feeling ; which is doubtless owing, in a great degree, to ignorance of foreign lands and their inhabitants. It was probably from the same feeling prevailing among the Arabs of his time that Mohham'mad was induced to promise such high rewards in a future world to those who fled their country

\* To express that a person has done this, they say, *sha'had el-hhawa'ig*, for *ghus'al el-hhawa'ig we-teshak'had 'aley'ha*.

† See Leviticus, xix., 32.



for the sake of his religion. I have heard it remarked as a proof of the extraordinary love which the Egyptians have for their native place, that a woman or girl in this country will seldom consent, or her parents allow her, to marry a man who will not promise to reside with her in her native town or village ; but I rather think that the reluctance to change the place of abode in this case arises from the risk which the female incurs of wanting the protection of her relations. The Bed'aweess are so attached to their deserts, and have so great a contempt for people who reside in towns, and for agriculturists, that it is a matter of surprise that so many of them were induced to settle even upon the fertile banks of the Nile. The modern Egyptians, though mostly descended from Bed'aweess, while they resemble their ancestors in love of their *native* country, have a horror of the desert. One journey in the desert furnishes them with tales of exaggerated hardships, perils, and wonders, which they are extremely fond of relating to their less experienced countrymen.

Indolence pervades all classes of the Egyptians, excepting those who are obliged to earn their livelihood by severe manual labour. It is the result of the climate, and of the fecundity of the soil. Even the mechanics, who are extremely greedy of gain, will generally spend two days in a work which they might easily accomplish in one ; and will leave the most lucrative employment to idle away their time with the pipe : but the porter, the groom, who runs before his master's horse, and the boatmen, who are often employed in towing the vessels up the river during calm and very hot weather, as well as many other labourers, endure extreme fatigue.

The Egyptians are also excessively obstinate. I have



mentioned, in a former chapter, that they have been notorious, from ancient times, that is, from the period of the Roman domination, for refusing to pay their taxes until they have been severely beaten; and that they often boast of the number of stripes which they have received before they would part with their money. Such conduct is very common among them. I was once told, that a fella'hh, from whom the value of about four shillings was demanded by his governor, endured so severe a bastinading rather than pay this paltry sum, which he declared he did not possess, that the governor ordered him to be dismissed; but, striking him on his face as he limped away, there fell out of his mouth a gold coin of the exact value of the sum demanded of him; so that his beating, terrible as it was, fell short of what was necessary to make him pay. This disposition seems a strange peculiarity in their character; but it is easily accounted for by the fact that they know very well the more readily they pay, the more will be exacted from them. In other respects, however, they are extremely obstinate and difficult to govern; though very obsequious in their manners and professions. It is seldom that an Egyptian workman can be induced to make a thing exactly to order: he will generally follow his own opinion in preference to that of his employer; and will scarcely ever finish his work by the time he has promised.

Though very submissive to their governors, the fella'hh-ee'n of Egypt are not deficient in courage when excited by feuds among each other; and they become excellent soldiers.

In sensuality, as far as it relates to the indulgence of libidinous passions, the Egyptians, as well as other



natives of hot climates, certainly exceed more northern nations; yet this excess is not to be attributed merely to the climate, but more especially to the institution of polygamy, to the facility with which divorcements are accomplished whenever a man may wish to marry a new wife, and to the custom of concubinage. It is even said, and, I believe, with truth, that, in this respect, they exceed the neighbouring nations, whose religion and civil institutions are similar; and that their country still deserves the appellation of "the abode of the wicked," which, in the Ckoo-a'n\*, is, according to the best commentators, applied to ancient Egypt, if we take the word here translated "wicked" in its more usual modern sense of "débauchees."—A vice for which the Memloo'ks who governed Egypt were infamous was so spread by them in this country as to become not less rare here than in almost any other country of the East; but of late years, it is said to have much decreased.

The most immodest freedom of conversation is indulged in by persons of both sexes, and of every station of life, in Egypt; even by the most virtuous and respectable women, with the exception of a very few, who often make use of coarse language, but not unchaste. From persons of the best education, expressions are often heard so obscene as only to be fit for a low brothel; and things are named, and subjects talked of, by the most genteel women, without any idea of their being indecorous, in the hearing of men, that many prostitutes in our country would abstain from mentioning.

The women of Egypt have the character of being the most licentious in their feelings of all females who lay

\* Chap. vii., ver. 142.



any claim to be considered as members of a civilized nation ; and this character is freely bestowed upon them by their countrymen, even in conversation with foreigners. What liberty they have, many of them, it is said, abuse ; and most of them are not considered safe, unless under lock and key ; to which restraint, few are subjected. It is believed that they possess a degree of cunning in the management of their intrigues that the most prudent and careful husband cannot guard against ; and, consequently, that their plots are seldom frustrated, however great may be the apparent risk of the undertakings in which they engage. Sometimes, the husband himself is made the unconscious means of gratifying his wife's criminal propensities. Some of the stories of the intrigues of women in the "Tales of a Thousand and one Nights" present faithful pictures of occurrences not unfrequent in the modern metropolis of Egypt. Many of the men of this city are of opinion that almost all the women would intrigue if they could do so without danger ; and that the greater proportion of them do. I should be sorry to think that the former opinion was just ; and I am almost persuaded that it is over-severe, because it appears, from the customs with regard to women generally prevailing here, that the latter must be false. The difficulty of carrying on an intrigue with a female in this place can hardly be conceived by a person who is not moderately well acquainted with Eastern customs and habits. It is not only difficult for a woman of the middle or higher classes to admit her paramour into the house in which she resides, but it is almost impossible for her to have a private interview with a man who has a *hbaree'm*, in his own house ; or to enter the house of an unmarried man, or one who has



not a concubine slave, without attracting the notice of the neighbours, and causing their immediate interference. But as it cannot be denied that many of the women of Egypt engage in intrigues notwithstanding such risks, it may be supposed that the difficulties which lie in the way are the chief bar to most others : for it is certain that the women of this country are, with very few exceptions, of highly libidinous dispositions. Among the females of the lower orders, intrigues are more easily accomplished, and frequent.

The libidinous character of the women of Egypt, and the licentious conduct of a great number of them, may be attributed to many causes ; partly, to the climate ; partly, to their want of proper instruction, and of innocent pastimes and employments ; partly, to the degree of restraint imposed upon them, and their seclusion from open intercourse with the other sex, which undoubtedly has a tendency rather to make women vicious than to secure them from vice : but it is more to be attributed to the conduct of the husbands themselves ; and to conduct far more disgraceful to them than the utmost severity that any of them is known to exercise in the regulations of his hharee'm. The generality of husbands in Egypt endeavour to increase the libidinous feelings of their wives by every means in their power ; though, at the same time, they assiduously study to prevent their indulging those feelings unlawfully. The women are permitted to listen, screened behind their windows of wooden lattice-work, to immoral songs and tales sung or related in the streets by men whom they pay for this entertainment ; and to view the voluptuous dances of the ghawa'zee, and of the effeminate khow'als. The ghawa'zee, who are professed prostitutes, are not unfre-



quently introduced into the hharee'ns of the wealthy, not merely to entertain the ladies with their dances, but to teach them their voluptuous arts; and even indecent puppets are sometimes brought into such hharee'ns for the amusement of the inmates.—Innumerable stories of the artifices and intrigues of the women of Egypt have been related to me. The following narratives of late occurrences will serve as specimens.

A slave-dealer, who had been possessed of property which enabled him to live in comfort, but had lost the greater part of it, married a young and handsome woman in this city, who had sufficient wealth to make up for his losses. He soon, however, neglected her; and as he was past the prime of life, she became indifferent to him, and placed her affections upon another man, a dust-man, who had been in the habit of coming to her house. She purchased, for this person, a shop close by her house; gave him a sum of money to enable him to pursue a less degraded occupation, as a seller of grain and fodder; and informed him that she had contrived a plan for his visiting her in perfect security. Her hharee'n had a window with hanging shutters; and almost close before this window rose a palm-tree, out-topping the house: this tree, she observed, would afford her lover a means of access to her, and of egress from her apartment, in case of danger. She had only one servant, a female, who engaged to assist her in the accomplishment of her desires. Previously to her lover's first visit to her, she desired the servant to inform her husband of what was about to take place in the ensuing night. He determined to keep watch; and, having told his wife that he was going out, and should not return that night, concealed himself in a lower apart-



ment. At night, the maid came to tell him that the visitor was in the *hharee'm*. He went up; but found the *hharee'm*-door shut. On his trying to open it, his wife screamed; her lover, at the same time, escaping from the window, by means of the palm-tree. She called to her neighbours—"Come to my assistance! Pray come! There is a robber in my house!"—Several of them soon came; and, finding her locked in her room, and her husband outside the door, told her there was nobody in the house but her husband and maid. She said that the man they called her husband was a robber: that her husband was gone to sleep out. The latter then informed them of what had passed; and insisted that a man was with her: he broke open the door, and searched the room; but finding no man, was reprimanded by his neighbours, and abused by his wife, for uttering a slander. The next day, his wife, taking with her, as witnesses of his having accused her of a criminal intrigue, two of the neighbours who had come in on hearing her screams for assistance, arraigned her husband at the *Mahh'kem'eh* as the slanderer of a virtuous woman without the evidence of his own sight or of other witnesses. Being convicted of this offence, he was punished with eighty stripes, in accordance with the ordinance of the *Ckoor-a'n* \*. His wife now asked him if he would divorce her; but he refused. For three days after this event, they lived peaceably together. On the third night, the wife, having invited her lover to visit her, bound her husband, hand and foot, while he was asleep, and tied him down to the mattress. Shortly after, her lover came up, and, waking the husband, threatened him with instant death if he should call, and

\* Chap. xxiv., ver. 4.



remained with the wife for several hours, in his presence. As soon as the intruder had gone, the husband was unbound by his wife, and called out to his neighbours, beating her at the same time with such violence that she, also, began to call for assistance. The neighbours coming in, and seeing him in a fury, easily believed her assertion that he had become raving mad, and, trying to soothe him with kind words, and prayers that God would restore him to sanity, liberated her from his grasp. She procured, as soon as possible, a rasoo'l from the Cka'dee; and went with him and her husband and several of her neighbours who had witnessed the beating that she had received, before the judge. The neighbours unanimously declared their opinion that her husband was mad; and the Cka'dee ordered that he should be conveyed to the Ma'rista'n \* (or common mad-house): but the wife, affecting to pity him, begged that she might be allowed to chain him in an apartment in her house, that she might alleviate his sufferings by waiting upon him. The Cka'dee assented; praising the benevolence of the woman, and praying that God might reward her. She accordingly procured an iron collar and a chain from the Ma'rista'n, and chained him in a lower apartment of her house. Every night, in his presence, her lover visited her: after which she importuned him in vain to divorce her; and when the neighbours came in daily to ask how he was, the only answer he received to his complaints and accusations against his wife was—"God restore thee! God restore thee!" Thus he continued about a month; and his wife, finding that he still persisted in refusing to divorce her, sent for a keeper of the Ma'rista'n to take him. The neighbours came

\* Vulgarly called *Moorista'n*.



round as he left the house: one exclaimed—"There is no strength nor power but in God! God restore thee!"—another said—"How sad! He was really a worthy man:"—a third remarked—"Ba'dinga'ns\* are very abundant just now."—While he was confined in the Ma'rista'n, his wife came daily to him, and asked him if he would divorce her: on his answering, "No," she said—"Then chained you may lie until you die; and my lover shall come to me constantly." At length, after seven months' confinement, he consented to divorce her. She procured his liberation; and he fulfilled his promise. Her lover was of too low a grade to become her husband; so she remained unmarried; and received him whenever she pleased: but the maid revealed the true history of this affair; and it soon became a subject of common talk.

When the wife of a man of wealth or rank engages in a criminal intrigue, both she and her paramour generally incur great danger †.—Last year, the wife of an officer of high rank in the army took advantage of the absence of her husband from the metropolis (where he always resided with her when not on military duty) to invite a Christian merchant, of whom she had been in the habit of buying silks, to pay her a visit. He went to her house at the time appointed, and found a

\* Madness is said to be more common and more violent in Egypt when the black ba'dinga'n (or black egg-plant) is in season: that is, in the hot weather.

† "How many men, in Musr," said one of my friends to me, "have lost their lives on account of women! A very handsome young libertine, who lived in this house which you now occupy, was beheaded here in the street, before his own door, for an intrigue with a wife of a Bey; and all the women of Musr wept for him."



eunuch at the door, who took him to another house, disguised him in the loose outer garments and veil of a lady, and then brought him back, and introduced him to his mistress. He passed nearly the whole of the night with her; and, rising before she awoke, put into his pocket a purse which he had given her, and went down to the eunuch, who conducted him again to the house where he had put on his disguise: having here resumed his own outer clothes, he repaired to his shop. Soon after, the lady, who had missed the purse, came, and taxed him with having taken it: she told him that she did not want money, but only desired his company; and begged him to come to her again in the ensuing evening; which he promised to do: but in the afternoon, a female servant from the house of this lady came to his shop, and told him that her mistress had mixed some poison in a bottle of water which she had ordered to be given him to drink.—This mode of revenge is said to have been often adopted when the woman's paramour has given her even a slight offence.

It is seldom that the wife of a Moos'lim is guilty of a criminal intrigue without being punished with death if there be four witnesses to the fact, and they or the husband prosecute her; and not always does she escape this punishment if she be detected by any of the officers of justice: in the latter case, four witnesses are not required, and often the woman, if of a respectable family, is put to death, generally in private, on the mere arbitrary authority of the government: but a bribe will sometimes save her; for it will always be accepted if it can with safety. Drowning is the punishment now almost always inflicted, publicly, upon women convicted of adultery in Cairo and other large towns of Egypt,



instead of that ordained by the law, which is stoning.—A few months ago, a poor woman of this city married a man whose trade was selling fowls, and, while living with him and her mother, took three other lodgings, and married three other husbands; all of whom were generally absent from the metropolis; so she calculated that when any of these three persons came to town for a few days she might easily find an excuse to go to him. They happened, unfortunately for her, to come to town on the same day; and all of them went, the same evening, to inquire for her at her mother's house. Being much embarrassed by their presence, and her first husband being also with her, she feigned to be ill, and soon to become insensible; and was taken, by her mother, to an inner room. One of the husbands proposed to give her something to restore her: another wished to try a different remedy: they began to contend which was the best medicine; and one of them said, "I shall give her what I please: is not she my wife?" "Your wife!" exclaimed each of the three other husbands at the same time: "she is *my* wife."—Each proved his marriage: the woman was taken to the Mahh'kem'eh; tried; condemned to death; and thrown into the Nile.—Some time ago, when I was before in this country, a similar case occurred: a woman married three soldiers, of the niza'm, or regular troops. She was buried in a hole breast-deep; and then shot.

A woman may sometimes, but very rarely, trust in palliating circumstances, or the support of powerful friends, to save her from the penalty of death, in case of her detection in a criminal intercourse; as in the following instance.—The Ba'sha, last year, gave one of the slaves in his hharee'm in marriage to a rich slave-merchant,



from whom he had purchased many of his memloo'ks and female slaves. This man was not only unfaithful to her; but utterly neglected her; and she, in consequence, formed an improper intimacy with a merchant of whom she was a frequent customer. One day, when her husband was out, a black slave belonging to him happened to see a man's head at a small aperture in a window of the hharee'm. He immediately went up to search the room of the wife; who, hearing him coming, locked her paramour in an adjoining closet. The slave broke open the door of the closet; and the man within rushed at him with a dagger which he wore in his girdle; but the former siezed the blade in his hand; and the woman held him until her lover had escaped: she then kissed the slave's hand, and implored him not to cause her death by informing her husband of what had passed: she, however, found him inexorable: he immediately went to his master, showing his bleeding hand, and telling him the cause of the wound. The woman, meanwhile, fled to the Ba'sha's hharee'm, for protection. Her husband demanded of the Ba'sha that she should be given up, and put to death; and, the request being deemed a proper one, she was brought before her former master to answer for her crime. She threw herself at his feet; kissed the skirt of his clothing; and acquainted him with her husband's vicious conduct, and his utter neglect of her. The Ba'sha, feeling *himself* insulted by the husband's conduct, spat in his face; and sent back the wife to his own hharee'm. Her paramour did not live long after this: he was smothered in the house of some courtesans; but none of these women was punished; as it could not be proved which of them committed the act.



For their sentiments with regard to women, and their general conduct towards the fair sex, the Egyptians, in common with other Moos'lims, have been reprehended with too great severity. It is true that they do not consider it necessary, or even delicate, to consult the choice of a girl under age previously to giving her away in matrimony; but it is not less true that a man of the middle or higher classes, almost always, makes his choice of a wife from hearsay, or as a person blindfold; having no means of seeing her until the contract is made, and she is brought to his house. It is impossible, therefore, that there should be any mutual attachment before marriage. Both sexes, in truth, are oppressed by tyrannical laws and customs; but, happily, they regard their chains as becoming and honourable: they would feel themselves disgraced by shaking them off. As to the restraint which is exercised towards the women, I have before remarked that it is in a great degree voluntary on their part, and that I believe it to be less strict in Egypt than in any other country of the Turkish empire: it is certainly far less so than it has been represented to be by many persons. They generally look upon this restraint with a degree of pride, as evincing the husband's care for them; and value themselves upon their being hidden as treasures\*. In good society, it is considered highly indecorous to inquire, in direct terms, respecting the health of a friend's wife, or of any female in his house, unless she be a relation of the person who makes the inquiry.—One of my Egyptian acquaintances asking another native of this country, who had been in Paris,

\* A respectable female is generally addressed, in a letter, as "the guarded lady, and concealed jewel" (*es-sitt el-masoo'neh we-l-go'harah el-meknoo'neh*).



what was the most remarkable thing that he had seen in the land of the infidels, the latter, thinking lightly of all that he had observed really worthy of exciting the admiration of an unprejudiced and a sensible man, gave the following answer. "I witnessed nothing so remarkable as this fact. It is a custom of every person among the rich and great, in Paris and other cities of France, frequently to invite his friends and acquaintances, both men and women, to an entertainment in his house. The rooms in which the company are received are lighted with a great number of candles and lamps. There, the men and women assemble promiscuously; the women, as you well know, unveiled; and a man may sit next to another's wife, whom he has never seen before, and may walk, talk, and even dance with her, in the very presence of her own husband, who is neither angry nor jealous at such disgraceful conduct."

The Egyptians are equally remarkable for generosity and cupidity. That two such opposite qualities should be united in the same mind is not a little surprising; but such is generally the case with this people. An over-reaching and deceitful disposition in commercial transactions, which is too common among all nations, is one of the most notorious faults of the Egyptian: in such cases, he seldom scruples to frame a falsehood which may better his bargain. Among people who groan beneath the yoke of a tyrannical and rapacious government (and such, indeed, is the government of Egypt), a disposition to avarice invariably predominates: for a man is naturally most tenacious of that which is most liable to be taken from him; and hence the oppressed Egyptian, when he has a sum of money which he does not require for necessary expenses, and cannot profitably



employ, generally lays it out in the purchase of ornaments for his wife or wives ; which ornaments he can easily convert again into money. Hence, also, it is a common practice in this country (as it is, or has been, in almost every country under similar political circumstances) for a man to hide treasure in his house, under the paved floor, or in some other part ; and as many a person who does so dies suddenly, without being able to inform his family where is his *mukh'ba*, or hiding-place, money is not unfrequently discovered on pulling down houses. A vice near akin to cupidity, namely envy, I believe to be equally prevalent among the modern Egyptians, in common with the whole Arab race ; for many of them are candid enough to confess their own opinion that this hateful disposition is almost wholly concentrated in the minds of their nation.

The Egyptians are generally honest in the payment of debts. Their Prophet asserted that even martyrdom would not atone for a debt undischarged. Few of them ever accept interest for a loan of money ; as it is strictly forbidden by their law.

Constant veracity is a virtue extremely rare in modern Egypt. Falsehood was *commended* by the Prophet when it tended to reconcile persons at variance with each other : also, when practised in order to please one's wife ; and to obtain any advantage in a war with the enemies of the faith : though highly reprobated in other cases. This offers some little palliation of the general practice of lying which prevails among the modern Moos'lims ; for, if people are allowed to lie in certain cases, they insensibly contract a habit of doing so in others. Though most of the Egyptians often lie designedly, they are seldom heard to retract an unintentional misstatement



without expressing themselves thus—"No, I beg forgiveness of God\* : it was so and so;" as, in stating anything of which they are not quite certain, they say, "God is all-knowing†."—I may here mention (and I do it with some feeling of national pride) that, some years ago, there was an Armenian jeweller in this city (Cairo) so noted for his veracity that his acquaintances determined to give him some appellation significant of his possessing a virtue so rare among them; and the name they gave him was *El-Ingilee'zee*, or *The Englishman*, which has become his family name. It is common to hear tradesmen in this place, when demanding a price which they do not mean to abate, say, "One word; the word of the English‡ : " they also often say, "the word of the Franks," in this sense : but I have never heard any particular nation thus honourably distinguished excepting the English and the Mugh'reb'ees, or Western Arabs, which latter people have acquired this reputation by being rather more veracious than most other Moos'lims.

I have before mentioned the practice of swearing by God which prevails among the Egyptians : I must here add, that many of them scruple not to make use of an oath with the view of obtaining credit to a falsehood. In this case, they sometimes say, "*Wa-lla'hi !*" ("By God !"); but more commonly, "*Wa-l'lah !*": for, though the latter expression has the same meaning as the former, they pretend that it may also be used as an ejaculation in praise of God; whereas "*Wa-lla'hi*" is a decided oath, and, if uttered to a falsehood, or violated, must be expiated by feeding or clothing ten poor

\* *La' astugh'fir Alla'h.*

† *Alla'hoo a'alam.*

‡ *Kul'met el-Ingilce'z.*



men, liberating a captive Moos'lim, or fasting three days\*. This, however, is the expiation allowed by the Ckoor-a'n only for an inconsiderate oath: yet the modern Moos'lims sometimes observe it in order to free themselves from the guilt of a deliberate false oath; and they generally prefer the fast to either of the other modes of expiation. There are some oaths which, I believe, few Moos'lims would falsely take; such as saying, three times, "By God, the Great †!", and the oath upon the moos'hhaf (or copy of the Ckoor-a'n)—saying, "By what this contains of the word of God!"—but a form of oath that is still more to be depended upon is that of saying, "I impose upon myself divorce-ment ‡" (that is, the divorce of my wife, if what I say be false); or, "I impose upon myself interdiction §!", which has a similar meaning ("My wife be unlawful to me!"); or, "I impose upon myself a triple divorcement ||!", which binds him by the irrevocable divorce of his wife. If a man use any one of these three forms of oath falsely, his wife, if he have but one, is divorced by the oath itself, if proved to be false, without further ceremony; and if he have two or more wives, he must, under such circumstances, choose one of them to put away. There are, however, abandoned liars who will swear falsely by the oath that is generally held most binding. A poet, speaking of a character of this description, says,

" But Ab'oo-l-Mo'al'la is most false  
When he swears by the oath of divorce."

The generality of the Egyptians are easily excited to quarrel; particularly those of the lower orders, who, on

\* Ckoor-a'n, chap. v., ver. 91. † *Wa-lla'hi-l-'azee'm.*

‡ *'Alel'ya-t-tala'ck.* § *'Alel'ya-l-hhara'm.*

|| *'Alel'ya-t-tala'ck bi-t-tela'teh.*



such occasions, curse each other's fathers, mothers, beards, &c. ; and lavish upon each other a variety of opprobrious epithets ; such as "son of the dog, pimp, pig," and an appellation which they think still worse than any of these, namely, "Jew." When one curses the father of the other, the latter generally retorts by cursing the father and mother, and sometimes the whole household, of his adversary. They menace each other ; but seldom proceed to blows. In a few instances, however, I have seen low persons in this country so enraged as to bite, and grasp each other by the throat. I have also witnessed many instances of forbearance on the part of individuals of the middle and lower classes, when grossly insulted : I have often heard an Egyptian say, on receiving a blow from an equal, "God bless thee !" "God requite thee good !" "Beat me again " In general, a quarrel terminates by one or both parties saying "Justice is against me\*:" often, after this, they recite the Fa't'hah together ; and then, sometimes, embrace and kiss one another.

The Egyptians are particularly prone to satire ; and often display considerable wit in their jeers and jests. Their language affords them great facilities for punning, and for ambiguous conversation, in which they very frequently indulge. The lower orders sometimes lampoon their rulers in songs, and ridicule those enactments of the government by which they themselves most suffer. I was once much amused with a song which I found to be very popular in the town and district of Aswa'n, on the southern frontier of Egypt : its burden was a plain invocation to the plague to take their tyrannical governor and his Copt clerk. Another

\* *EL-hhack'ch 'alet'ya.*



song, which was popular throughout Egypt during my first visit to this country, and which was composed on the occasion of an increase of the income-tax called *fir'deh*, began thus: "You who have [nothing on your head but] a *lib'deh*! sell it, and pay the *fir'deh*." The *lib'deh*, I have before mentioned, is a felt cap, which is worn under, or instead of, the turban; and the man must be very poor who has no other covering than this for his head.



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9. Line 15, after "above it," add, "This upper window, if of lattice-work, is often fancifully worked with the representation of a basin with a ewer above it, or the figure of a lion, or the name of God, or the words 'God is my hope,' &c."
18. Line 2, for "prefixed," read "appended."
30. Line 18. The term 'Aī'ab was formerly used to designate the *townspeople* of Arabian origin, while the people of the same race who dwelt in the *desert* were called *Aara'b*, or *Aara'bees*.
48. Note. Add,— "Some women pluck out the hair after merely rubbing the part with the ashes of charcoal."
58. Note, line 1, for "Futoot'meh," read "Futtoo'meh."
83. Line 18. Add,— "*Blind* men are generally preferred for the office of moo-ed'dins, that the *iharee'ins* and terraces of surrounding houses may not be overlooked from the *ma'd'nehs*."
150. Line 17, for "*khut'mehs*," read "*khut'mehs*."
167. Last line. Insert a period after "tube."
175. Last line of text. Insert a period after "*saf'rah*."
263. Line 17. "*Ma' hoo'sh*" is vulgarly contracted into "*mo'sh*."
278. Note. It should be added, that the era does not commence from the day on which the Prophet departed from Mek'keh (as most of our authors who have mentioned this subject suppose), but from the first day of the moon or month of Mohhar'ram preceding that event. It is said that Mohham'mad, after having remained concealed in a cave near Mek'keh three days, with Ab'oo Bekr, began his journey, or "the flight," to El-Medee'neh, on the ninth day of the third month (Rabee'ā el-Ow'wal), sixty-eight days after the commencement of the era. Thus the first two months are



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made of thirty days each, which is often the case when the calculation from the actual sight of the new moon is followed; and the flight itself, from the cave, may be inferred to have commenced on the 22d of September.

322 and 323, for "alumn, read "alum."

335. Line 14, for "obtained," read "attained."

375. Line 1, dele comma after "it."



